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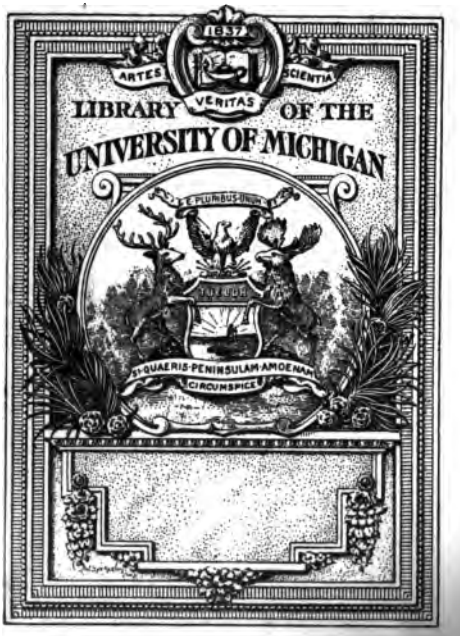
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OF

ENGLISH POETS,

FROM

JOHNSON TO KIRKE WHITE,

DESIGNED AS A CONTINUATION OF JOHNSON'S LIVES.

BY THE LATE

REV. HENRY FRANCIS CARY, M.A.

TRANSLATOR OF DANTE.

LONDON:

HENRY G. BOHN, YORK STREET, COVENT GARDEN.

MDCCCXLVI.

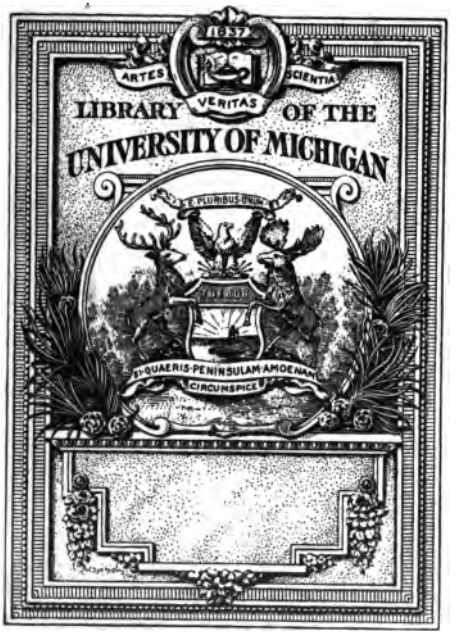
EDITOR'S PREFACE.

THE papers of which this volume is composed originally appeared in the London Magazine, between the years 1821 and 1824. It was the author's intention to continue the series of Lives to a later period, but a change in the proprietorship of the Magazine prevented the completion of his plan. They are now for the first time published in a separate form, and under their author's name.

In seeing the work through the press, the Editor has had occasion only to alter one or two particulars in the Life of Goldsmith, which the labours of that Poet's more recent biographer, Mr. Prior, have subsequently elucidated.

HENRY CARY.

WORCESTER COLLEGE,
OXFORD.
Dec. 1, 1845.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LIVES OF ENGLISH POETS.

little from the master; whereas, with Hunter, he had learned much from the master, and little in the school. The progress he made was, perhaps, gained in teaching the other boys, for Wentworth is said to have employed him as an assistant. His compositions in English verse indicate that command of language which he afterwards attained. The two following years he accuses himself of wasting in idleness at home; but we must doubt whether he had much occasion for self-reproach, when we learn that Hesiod, Anacreon, the Latin works of Petrarch, and "a great many other books not commonly known in the Universities," were among his studies.

His father, though a man of strong understanding, and much respected in his line of life, was not successful in business. He must, therefore, have had a firm reliance on the capacity of his son; for while he chided him for his want of steady application, he resolved on making so great an effort as to send him to the University; and, accompanying him thither, placed him, on the 31st of October, 1728, a commoner at Pembroke College, Oxford. Some assistance was, indeed, promised him from other quarters, but this assistance was never given; nor was his industry quickened by his necessities. He was sometimes to be seen lingering about the gates of his college; and, at others, sought for relief from the oppression of his mind in affected mirth and turbulent gaiety. So ex-

treme was his poverty, that he was prevented by the want of shoes from resorting to the rooms of his schoolfellow, Taylor, at the neighbouring college of Christ Church; and such was his pride, that he flung away with indignation a new pair that he found left at his door. His scholarship was attested by a translation into Latin verse of Pope's Messiah; which is said to have gained the approbation of that poet. But his independent spirit, and his irregular habits, were both likely to obstruct his interest in the University; and, at the end of three years, increasing debts, together with the failure of remittances, occasioned by his father's insolvency, forced him to leave it without a degree. Of Pembroke College, in his Life of Shenstone, and of Sir Thomas Browne, he has spoken with filial gratitude. From his tutor, Mr. Jorden, whom he described as a "worthy man, but a heavy one," he did not learn much. What he read solidly, he said, was Greek; and that Greek, Homer and Euripides; but his favourite study was metaphysics, which we must suppose him to have investigated by the light of his own meditation, for he did not read much in it. With Dr. Adams, then a junior fellow, and afterwards master of the College, his friendship continued till his death.

Soon after his return to Lichfield, his father died; and the following memorandum, extracted from the little register which he kept in Latin, of the more re-

markable occurrences that befel him, proves at once the small pittance that was left him, and the integrity of his mind: "1732, Julii 15. Undecim aureos deposui: quo die quicquid ante matris funus (quod serum sit precor) de paternis bonis sperare licet, viginti scilicet libras accepi. Usque adeo mihi fortuna fingenda est. Interea ne paupertate vires animi languescant nec in flagitium egestas abigat, cavendum.—1732, July 15. I laid down eleven guineas. On which day, I received the whole of what it is allowed me to expect from my father's property, before the decease of my mother (which I pray may be yet far distant) namely, twenty pounds. My fortune therefore must be of my own making. Meanwhile, let me beware lest the powers of my mind grow languid through poverty, or want drive me to evil." On the following day we find him setting out on foot for Market Bosworth, in Leicestershire, where he had engaged himself as an usher to the school of which Mr. Crompton was master. Here he described to his old school-fellow, Hector, the dull sameness of his life, in the words of the poet: Vitam continet una dies: that it was as unvaried as the note of the cuckoo, and that he did not know whether it were more disagreeable for him to teach, or for the boys to learn the grammar rules. To add to his misery, he had to endure the petty despotism of Sir Wolstan Dixie, one of the patrons of the school. The trial of a few

months disgusted him so much with his employment, that he relinquished it, and, removing to Birmingham, became the guest of his friend Mr. Hector, who was a chirurgeon in that town, and lodged in the house of a bookseller; having remained with him about six months, he hired lodgings for himself. By Mr. Hector he was stimulated, not without some difficulty, to make a translation from the French, of Lobo's Voyage to Abyssinia, for which he received no more than five guineas from the bookseller, who, by an artifice not uncommon, printed it at Birmingham, with the date of London in the title-page. To Mr. Hector, therefore, is due the impulse which first made Johnson an author. The motion being once given did not cease; for, having returned to Lichfield in 1735, he sent forth in August proposals for printing by subscription Politian's Latin Poems, with a Life of the Author, Notes, and a History of Latin Poetry, from the age of Petrarch to that of Politian. His reason for fixing on this era it is not easy to determine. Mussato preceded Petrarch, the interval between Petrarch and Politian is not particularly illustrated by excellence in Latin poetry; and Politian was much surpassed in correctness and elegance, if not in genius, by those who came after him—by Flaminio, Navagero, and Fracastorio. Yet in the hands of Johnson, such a subject would not have been wanting in instruction or entertainment. Such as were willing to subscribe,

were referred to his brother, Nathaniel Johnson, who had succeeded to his father's business in Lichfield; but the design was dropped, for want of a sufficient number of names to encourage it, a deficiency not much to be wondered at, unless the inhabitants of provincial towns were more learned in those days than at present.

In this year, he made another effort to obtain the means of subsistence by an offer of his pen to Cave, the editor of the Gentleman's Magazine; but the immediate result of the application is not known; nor in what manner he supported himself till July 1736, when he married Elizabeth Porter, the widow of a mercer at Birmingham, and daughter of William Jervis, Esq. of Great Peatling, in Leicestershire. This woman, who was twenty years older than himself, and to whose daughter he had been an unsuccessful suitor, brought him eight hundred pounds; but, according to Garrick's report of her, was neither amiable nor handsome, though that she was both in Johnson's estimation appears from the epithets "formosæ, cultæ, ingeniosæ," which he inscribed on her tombstone. Their nuptials were celebrated at Derby, and to that town they went together on horseback from Birmingham; but the bride assuming some airs of caprice on the road, like another Petruchio he gave her such effectual proofs of resolution, as reduced her to the abjectness of shedding tears. His

first project after his marriage was to set up a school; and, with this intention, he hired a very commodious house, at the distance of about two miles from Lichfield, called Edial Hall, which has lately been taken down, and of which a representation is to be seen in the History of Lichfield, by Mr. Harwood. One of my friends, who inhabited it for the same purpose, has told me that an old countryman who lived near it, and remembered Johnson and his pupil Garrick, said to him, "that Johnson was not much of a scholar to look at, but that master Garrick was a strange one for leaping over a stile." It is amusing to observe the impressions which such men make on common minds. Unfortunately the prejudice occasioned by Johnson's unsightly exterior was not confined to the vulgar, insomuch that it has been thought to be the reason why so few parents committed their children to his care, for he had only three pupils. This unscholar-like appearance it must have been that made the bookseller in the Strand, to whom he applied for literary employment, eye him archly, and recommend it to him rather to purchase a porter's knot. But, as an old philosopher has said, every thing has two handles. It was, perhaps, the contrast between the body and the mind, between the incultum corpus, and the ingenium, which afterwards was one cause of his being received so willingly in those circles of what is called high life, where any thing that is exceedingly

strange and unusual is apt to carry its own recommendation with it. Failing in his attempt at Edial, he was disposed once more to engage in the drudgery of an usher, and offered himself in that capacity to the Rev. William Budworth, master of the grammar-school at Brewood, in Staffordshire, celebrated for having been the place in which Bishop Hurd received his education, under that master. But here again nature stood in his way; for Budworth was fearful lest a strange motion with the head, the effect probably of disease, to which Johnson was habitually subject, might excite the derision of his scholars, and for that reason declined employing him. He now resolved on trying his fortune in the capital.

Among the many respectable families in Lichfield, into whose society Johnson had been admitted, none afforded so great encouragement to his literary talents as that of Mr. Walmsley, who lived in the Bishop's palace, and was registrar of the Ecclesiastical Court, and whom he has so eloquently commemorated in his Lives of the Poets. By this gentleman he was introduced in a letter to the Rev. Mr. Colson, Lucasian Professor of Mathematics in the University of Cambridge, and the master of an academy, "as a very good scholar, and one who he had great hopes would turn out a fine dramatic writer, who intended to try his fate with a tragedy, and to get himself employed in some translation, either from the Latin or the French."

The tragedy on which Mr. Walmsley founded his expectations of Johnson's future eminence as a dramatic poet, was the Irene. A shrewd sally of humour, to which the reading of this piece gave rise, evinces the terms of familiarity on which he was with his patron; for, on Walmsley's observing, when some part of it had been read, that the poet had already involved his heroine in such distress, that he did not see what further he could do to excite the commiseration of the audience, Johnson replied, "that he could put her into the Ecclesiastical Court." Garrick, who was to be placed at Colson's academy, accompanied his former instructor on this expedition to London, at the beginning of March, 1737. It does not appear that Mr. Walmsley's recommendation of him to Colson, whom he has described under the character of Gelidus,* in the twenty-fourth paper of the Rambler, was of much use. He first took lodgings in Exeter-street in the Strand, but soon retired to Greenwich, for the sake of completing his tragedy, which he used to compose, walking in the Park.

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* In a note to Johnson's Works, 8vo. Edition, 1810, it is said that this is rendered improbable by the account given of Colson, by Davies, in his life of Garrick, which was certainly written under Dr. Johnson's inspection, and, what relates to Colson, probably from Johnson's confirmation.

From Greenwich, he addressed another letter to Cave, with proposals for translating Paul Sarpi's History of the Council of Trent, with the notes of Le Courayer. Before the summer was expired, he returned for Mrs. Johnson, whom he had left at Lichfield, and remaining there three months, at length finished Irene. On his second visit to London, his lodgings were first in Woodstock-street, near Hanover Square, and then in Castle-street, near Cavendish Square. His tragedy, which was brought on the stage twelve years after by Garrick, having been at this time rejected by the manager of the playhouse, he was forced to relinquish his hopes of becoming a dramatic writer, and engaged himself to write for the Gentleman's Magazine. The debates in Parliament were not then allowed to be given to the public with the same unrestricted and generous freedom with which it is now permitted to report them. To elude this prohibition, and gratify the just curiosity of the country, the several members were designated by fictitious names, under which they were easily discoverable; and their speeches in both Houses of Parliament, which was entitled the Senate of Lilliput, were in this manner imparted to the nation in the periodical work above-mentioned. At first, Johnson only revised these reports; but he became so dexterous in the execution of his task, that he required only to be told the names of the speakers, and the side of the question to be espoused, in order

to frame the speeches himself; an artifice not wholly excusable, which afterwards occasioned him some self-reproach, and even at the time pleased him so little, that he did not consent to continue it. The whole extent of his assistance to Cave is not known. The Lives of Paul Sarpi, Boerhaave, Admirals Drake and Blake, Barretier, Burnan, Sydenham, and Roscommon, with the Essay on Epitaphs, and an Essay on the Account of the Conduct of the Duchess of Marlborough, were certainly contributed to his Miscellany by Johnson. Two tracts, the one a Vindication of the Licenser of the Stage from the Aspersions of Brooke, Author of Gustavus Vasa; the other, Marmor Norfolciense, a pamphlet levelled against Sir Robert Walpole and the Hanoverian succession, were published by him, separately, in 1739.

For his version of Sarpi's History, he had received from Cave, before the 21st of April in this year, fifty pounds, and some sheets of it had been committed to the press, when, unfortunately, the design was stopped, in consequence of proposals appearing for a translation of the same book, by another person of the same name as our author, who was curate of St. Martin's in the Fields, and patronized by Dr. Pearce, the editor of Longinus. Warburton* afterwards expressed a wish that Johnson would give the

* Nichols's Literary Anecdotes, vol. v. p. 696.

original on one side, and his translation on the other. His next engagement was to draw up an account of the printed books in the Earl of Oxford's library, for Osborne, the bookseller, who had purchased them for thirteen thousand pounds. Such was the petulant impatience of Osborne, during the progress of this irksome task, that Johnson was once irritated so far as to beat him.

In May, 1738, appeared his "London," imitated from the Third Satire of Juveual, for which he got ten guineas from Dodsley. The excellence of this poem was so immediately perceived, that it reached a second edition in the course of a week. Pope having made some ineffectual inquiries concerning the author, from Mr. Richardson, the son of the painter, observed that he would soon be *deterré*. In the August of 1739, we find him so far known to Pope, that at his intercession, Earl Gower applied to a friend of Swift to assist in procuring from the University the degree of Master of Arts, that he might be enabled to become a candidate for the mastership of a school then vacant; the application was without success.

His own wants, however pressing, did not hinder him from assisting his mother, who had lost her other son. A letter to Mr. Levett, of Lichfield, on the subject of a debt, for which he makes himself responsible on her account, affords so striking a

proof of filial tenderness, that I cannot refuse myself the pleasure of transcribing it.

December, 1, 1743.

Sir,—I am extremely sorry that we have encroached so much upon your forbearance with respect to the interest, which a great perplexity of affairs hindered me from thinking of with that attention that I ought, and which I am not immediately able to remit to you, but will pay it (I think twelve pounds) in two months. I look upon this, and on the future interest of that mortgage, as my own debt; and beg that you will be pleased to give me directions how to pay it, and not mention it to my dear mother. If it be necessary to pay this in less time, I believe I can do it; but I take two months for certainty, and beg an answer whether you can allow me so much time. I think myself very much obliged for your forbearance, and shall esteem it a great happiness to be able to serve you. I have great opportunities of dispersing any thing that you may think it proper to make public. I will give a note for the money payable at the time mentioned, to any one here that you shall appoint.

I am, Sir, your most obedient,
and most humble servant,
SAM. JOHNSON.

At Mr. Osborne's, Bookseller,
in Gray's Inn.

In the following year (1744) he produced his Life of Savage, a work that gives the charm of a romance

to a narrative of real events; and which, bearing the stamp of that eagerness and rapidity with which it was thrown off the mind of the writer, exhibits rather the fervour of an eloquent advocate, than the laboriousness of a minute biographer. The forty-eight octavo pages, as he told Mr. Nichols,* were written in one day and night. At its first appearance it was warmly praised, in the Champion, probably either by Fielding, or by Ralph, who succeeded to him in a share of that paper; and Sir Joshua Reynolds, when it came into his hand, found his attention so powerfully arrested, that he read it through without changing his posture, as he perceived by the torpidness of one of his arms that had rested on a chimney-piece by which he was standing. For the Life of Savage,† he received fifteen guineas from Cave. About this time he fell into the company of Collins, with whom, as he tells us in his life of that poet, he delighted to converse.

His next publication (in 1745) was a pamphlet, called "Miscellaneous Observations on the Tragedy of Macbeth, with Remarks on Sir T. H. (Sir Thomas Hanmer's) Edition of Shakspeare," to which were subjoined, proposals for a new edition of his plays. These observations were favourably mentioned by

* Nichols's Literary Anecdotes, vol. v. p. 15.

† Ibid. vol. viii.

Warburton, in the preface to his edition; and Johnson's gratitude for praise bestowed at a time when praise was of value to him, was fervent and lasting. Yet Warburton, with his usual intolerance of any dissent from his opinions, afterwards complained in a private letter* to Hurd, that Johnson's remarks on his commentaries were full of insolence and malignant reflections, which, had they not in them "as much folly as malignity," he should have had reason to be offended with.

In 1747, he furnished Garrick, who had become joint-patentee and manager of Drury Lane, with a Prologue on the opening of the house. This address has been commended quite as much as it deserves. The characters of Shakspeare and Ben Jonson are, indeed, discriminated with much skill; but surely something might have been said, if not of Massinger and Beaumont and Fletcher, yet at least of Congreve and Otway, who are involved in the sweeping censure passed on "the wits of Charles."

Of all his various literary undertakings, that in which he now engaged was the most arduous, a Dictionary of the English language. His plan of this work was, at the desire of Dodsley, inscribed to the Earl of Chesterfield, then one of the Secretaries of State; Dodsley, in conjunction with six other book-

* Warburton's Letters, 8vo. Edit. p. 369.

sellers, stipulated fifteen hundred and seventy-five pounds as the price of his labour; a sum, from which, when the expenses of paper and transcription were deducted, a small portion only remained for the compiler. In other countries, this national desideratum has been supplied by the united exertions of the learned. Had the project for such a combination in Queen Anne's reign been carried into execution, the result might have been fewer defects and less excellence: the explanation of technical terms would probably have been more exact, the derivations more copious, and a greater number of significant words* now omitted, have been collected from our earliest writers; but the citations would often have been made with less judgment, and the definitions laid down with less acuteness of discrimination.

From his new patron, whom he courted without the aid of those graces so devoutly worshipped by that nobleman, he reaped but small advantage; and, being much exasperated at his neglect, Johnson addressed to him a very cutting, but, it must be owned, an intemperate letter, renouncing his protection, though, when the Dictionary was completed, Chesterfield had ushered its appearance before the public in two complimentary papers in the World;

* This defect has probably been remedied by Mr. Todd's enlargement of the Dictionary.

but the homage of the client was not to be recalled, or even his resentment to be appeased. His great work is thus spoken of at its first appearance, in a letter from Thomas Warton to his brother.* "The Dictionary is arrived; the preface is noble. There is a grammar prefixed, and the history of the language is pretty full; but you may plainly perceive strokes of laxity and indolence. They are two most unwieldy volumes. I have written to him an invitation. I fear his preface will disgust, by the expressions of his consciousness of superiority, and of his contempt of patronage." In 1773, when he gave a second edition, with additions and corrections, he announced in a few prefatory lines that he had expunged some superfluities, and corrected some faults, and here and there had scattered a remark; but that the main fabric continued the same. "I have looked into it," he observes, in a letter to Boswell, "very little since I wrote it, and, I think, I found it full as often better as worse than I expected."

To trace in order of time the various changes in Johnson's place of residence in the metropolis, if it were worth the trouble, would not be possible. A list of them, which he gave to Boswell, amounting to seventeen, but without the correspondent dates, is preserved by that writer. For the sake of being

* Wooll's Life of Joseph Warton, p. 230.

near his printer, while the Dictionary was on the anvil, he took a convenient house in Gough Square, near Fleet-street, and fitted up one room in it as an office, where six amanuenses were employed in transcribing for him, of whom Boswell recounts in triumph that five were Scotchmen.

In 1748, he wrote, for Dodsley's Preceptor, the Preface, and the Vision of Theodore the Hermit, to which Johnson has been heard to give the preference over all his other writings. In the January of the ensuing year, appeared the Vanity of Human Wishes, being the Tenth Satire of Juvenal imitated, which he sold for fifteen guineas; and, in the next month, his Irene was brought on the stage, not without a previous altercation between the poet and his former pupil, concerning some changes which Garrick's superior knowledge of the stage made him consider to be necessary, but which Johnson said the fellow desired only that they might afford him more opportunity of tossing his hands and kicking his heels. He always treated the art of a player with illiberal contempt; but was at length, by the intervention of Dr. Taylor, prevailed on to give way to the suggestions of Garrick. Yet Garrick had not made him alter all that needed altering; for the first exhibition of Irene shocked the spectators with the novel sight of a heroine who was to utter two verses with the bowstring about her neck. This horror was removed

from a second representation; but, after the usual course of ten nights, the tragedy was no longer in request. Johnson thought it requisite, on this occasion, to depart from the usual homeliness of his habit, and to appear behind the scenes, and in the side boxes, with the decoration of a gold-laced hat and waistcoat. He observed, that he found himself unable to behave with the same ease in his finery, as when dressed in his plain clothes. In the winter of this year, he established a weekly club, at the King's Head, in Ivy Lane, near St. Paul's, of which the other members were Dr. Salter, a Cambridge divine; Hawkesworth; Mr. Ryland, a merchant; Mr. John Payne, the bookseller; Mr. John Dyer, a man of considerable erudition, and a friend of Burke's; Doctors Macghie, Baker, and Bathurst, three physicians; and Sir John Hawkins.

He next became a candidate for public favour, as the writer of a periodical work, in the manner of the Spectator; and, in March, 1750, published the first number of the Rambler, which was continued for nearly two years; but, wanting variety of matter, and familiarity of style, failed to attract many readers, so that the largest number of copies that were sold of any one paper did not exceed five hundred. The topics were selected without sufficient regard to the popular taste. The grievances and distresses of authors particularly were dwelt on to satiety; and

the tone of eloquence was more swelling and stately than he had hitherto adopted. The papers allotted to criticism are marked by his usual acumen; but the justice of his opinions is often questionable. In the humourous pieces, when our laughter is excited, I doubt the author himself, who is always discoverable under the masque of whatever character he assumes, is as much the object as the cause of our merriment; and, however moral and devout his more serious views of life, they are often defective in that most engaging feature of sound religion, a cheerful spirit. The only assistance he received was from Richardson, Mrs. Chapone, Miss Talbot, and Mrs. Carter, the first of whom contributed the 97th number; the second, four billets in the 10th; the next, the 30th; and the last, the 44th and 100th numbers.

Three days after the completion of the Rambler (March 17, 1752), he was deprived of his wife, whom, notwithstanding the disparity in their age, and some occasional bickerings, he had tenderly loved. Those who are disposed to scrutinize narrowly and severely into the human heart, may question the sincerity of his sorrow, because he was collected enough to write her funeral sermon. But the shapes which grief puts on in different minds are as dissimilar as the constitution of those minds. Milton, in whom the power of imagination was predominant, soothed his

anguish for the loss of his youthful friend, in an irregular, but most beautiful assemblage of those poetic objects which presented themselves to his thoughts, and consecrated them to the memory of the deceased; and Johnson, who loved to act the moralizer and the rhetorician, alleviated his sufferings by declaiming on the instability of human happiness.

During this interval he also wrote the Prologue to Comus, spoken by Garrick, for the benefit of Mrs. Elizabeth Foster, grand-daughter to Milton; the Prologue and Postscript to Lauder's impudent forgeries concerning that poet, by which Johnson was imposed on, as well as the rest of the world; a letter to Dr. Douglas, for the same impostor, after he had been detected, acknowledging and expressing contrition for the fraud; and the Life of Cheynel, in the Student.

Soon after his wife's death, he became intimate with Beauclerk and Langton, two young men of family and distinction, who were fellow collegians at Oxford, and much attached to each other; and the latter of whom admiration of the Rambler had brought to London with the express view of being introduced to the author. Their society was very agreeable to him; and he was, perhaps, glad to forget himself by joining at times in their sallies of juvenile gaiety. One night, when he had lodgings in the Temple, he

was roused by their knocking at his door; and appearing in his shirt and nightcap, he found they had come together from the tavern where they had supped, to prevail on him to accompany them in a nocturnal ramble. He readily entered into their proposal; and, having indulged themselves till morning in such frolics as came in their way, Johnson and Beauclerk were so well pleased with their diversion, that they continued it through the rest of the day; while their less sprightly companion left them, to keep an engagement with some ladies at breakfast, not without reproaches from Johnson for deserting his friends "for a set of unidea'd girls."

In 1753, he gave to Dr. Bathurst, the physician, whom he regarded with much affection, and whose practice was very limited, several essays for the Adventurer, which Hawkesworth was then publishing; and wrote for Mrs. Lenox a Dedication to the Earl of Orrery, of her Shakspeare illustrated; and, in the following year, inserted in the Gentleman's Magazine a Life of Cave, its former editor.

Previously to the publication of his Dictionary, it was thought advisable by his friends that the degree of Master of Arts should be obtained for him, in order that his name might appear in the title page with that addition; and it was accordingly, through their intercession, conferred on him by the University of Oxford. The work was presented by the Earl of

Orrery, one of his friends then at Florence, to the Della Crusca Academy, who, in return, sent their Dictionary to the author. The French Academy paid him the same compliment. But these honours were not accompanied by that indispensable requisite, "provision for the day that was passing over him." He was arrested for debt, and liberated by the kindness of Richardson, the writer of Clarissa, who became his surety. To prevent such humiliation, the efforts of his own industry were not wanting. In 1756, he published an Abridgement of his Dictionary, and an Edition of Sir Thomas Browne's Christian Morals, to which he prefixed a Life of that writer; he contributed to a periodical miscellany, called the Universal Visitor, by Christopher Smart,* and yet more largely to another work of the same kind, entitled, the Literary Magazine; and wrote a dedication and preface for Payne's Introduction to the Game of Draughts, and an Introduction to the newspaper called the London Chronicle, for the last of which he received a single guinea. Yet either conscientious scruples, or his unwillingness to relinquish a London life, induced him to decline the offer

* The writers, besides Smart, were Richard Rolt, Garrick, and Dr. Percy. Their papers are signed with the initials of their surnames. Johnson's are marked by two asterisks.—*See Hawkins's Life of Johnson*, p. 351.

of a valuable benefice in Lincolnshire, which was made him by the father of his friend, Langton, provided he could prevail on himself to take holy orders, a measure that would have delivered him from literary toil for the remainder of his days. But literary toil was the occupation for which nature had designed him. In the April of 1758, he commenced the Idler, and continued to publish it for two years in the Universal Chronicle. Of these Essays, he was supplied with Nos. 33, 93, and 96, by Thomas Warton; with No. 67 by Langton, and with Nos. 76, 79, and 82 by Reynolds. Boswell mentions twelve papers being given by his friends, but does not say who were the contributors of the remaining five. The Essay on Epitaphs, the Dissertation on Pope's Epitaphs, and an Essay on the Bravery of the English common Soldiers, were subjoined to this paper, when it was collected into volumes. It does not differ from the Rambler, otherwise than as the essays are shorter, and somewhat less grave and elaborate.

Another wound was inflicted on him by the death of his mother, who had however reached her ninetieth year. His affection and his regret will best appear from the following letter to the daughter of his deceased wife.

To Miss Porter, in Lichfield.

You will conceive my sorrow for the loss of my mother, of the best mother. If she were to live again, surely I

should behave better to her. But she is happy, and what is past is nothing to her: and, for me, since I cannot repair my faults to her, I hope repentance will efface them. I return you, and all those that have been good to her, my sincerest thanks, and pray God to repay you all with infinite advantage. Write to me, and comfort me, dear child. I shall be glad likewise, if Kitty will write to me. I shall send a bill of twenty pounds in a few days, which I thought to have brought to my mother, but God suffered it not. I have not power nor composure to say much more. God bless you, and bless us all.

I am, dear Miss,
Your affectionate humble servant,
SAM. JOHNSON.

Her attention to his mother, as it is reported in the following words, by Miss Seward, ensured to Johnson the sympathy of Lucy Porter.

From the age of twenty till her fortieth year, when affluence came to her by the death of her eldest brother, she had boarded in Lichfield with Dr. Johnson's mother, who still kept that little bookseller's shop, by which her husband had supplied the scanty means of existence. Meanwhile, Lucy Porter kept the best company of our little city, but would make no engagement on market-days, lest Granny, as she called Mrs. Johnson, should catch cold by serving in the shop. There Lucy Porter took her place, standing behind the counter, nor thought

it a disgrace to thank a poor person who purchased from her a penny battledore.*

To defray the expenses of his mother's funeral, he had recourse to his pen; and, in the evenings of one week produced the Rasselas, for which he received one hundred pounds, and was presented by the purchasers with twenty-five more on its reaching a second edition. Rasselas is a noble monument of the genius of its author. Reflections so profound, and so forcible a draught of some of the great outlines of the human intellect and passions, are to be found in few writers of any age or country. The mind is seldom presented with any thing so marvellous as the character of the philosopher, who has persuaded himself that he is entrusted with the management of the elements. Johnson's dread of insanity was, perhaps, relieved by embodying this mighty conception. He had seen the shadowy form in the twilight, and might have dissipated or eased his apprehensions by coming up to it more closely, and examining into the occasion of his fears. In this tale, the censure which he has elsewhere passed on Milton, that he is a lion who has no skill in dandling the kid, recoils upon himself. His delineation of the female character is wanting in delicacy.

In this year he supplied Mr. Newbery with an

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* Miss Seward's letters, vol. i. p. 117.

Introduction to the World Displayed, a Collection of Voyages and Travels: till the publication of his Shakspeare, in 1765, the only writings acknowledged by himself were a Review of Tytler's Vindication of Mary Queen of Scots, in the Gentleman's Magazine; an Introduction to the Proceedings of the Committee for Clothing the French Prisoners; the Preface to Rolt's Dictionary of Trade and Commerce; a Dedication to the King, of Kennedy's Complete System of Astronomical Chronology, unfolding the Scriptures; and a Dedication to the Queen, of Hoole's Tasso.

In the course of this period, he made a short visit to Lichfield, and thus communicates his feelings on the occasion, in a letter dated July 20, 1762, to Baretti, his Italian friend, who was then at Milan.

Last winter I went down to my native town, where I found the streets much narrower and shorter than I thought I had left them, inhabited by a new race of people, to whom I was very little known. My playfellows were grown old, and forced me to suspect that I am no longer young. My only remaining friend had changed his principles, and was become the tool of the predominant faction. My daughter-in-law, from whom I expected most, and whom I met with sincere benevolence, had lost the beauty and gaiety of youth, without having gained much of the wisdom of age. I wandered about for five days, and took the first convenient opportunity of returning to a place, where, if there is not much

happiness, there is at least such a diversity of good and evil, that slight vexations do not fix upon the heart.

I think in a few weeks to try another excursion; though to what end? Let me know, my Baretti, what has been the result of your return to your own country; whether time has made any alteration for the better, and, whether, when the first rapture of salutation was over, you did not find your thoughts confessed their disappointment.

Henceforward Johnson had no longer to struggle with the evils of extreme poverty. A pension of £300. was granted to him, in 1762, by His Majesty. Before his acceptance of it, in answer to a question put by him to the Earl of Bute, in these words, "Pray, my Lord, what am I to do for the pension?" he was assured by that nobleman that it was not given him for any thing he was to do, but for what he had done. The definition he had given of the word pension, in his dictionary, that in England it was generally understood to mean pay, given to a state hireling, for treason to his country, raised some further scruples whether he ought himself to become a pensioner; but they were removed by the arguments, or the persuasion of Mr. Reynolds, to whom he had recourse for advice in this dilemma. What advice Reynolds would give him he must have known pretty well before-hand; but this was one of the many instances in which men, having first determined how to act, are

willing to imagine that they are going for clearer information, where they in truth expect nothing but a confirmation of their own resolve. The liberality of the nation could not have been extended to one who had better deserved it. But he had a calamity yet more dreadful than poverty to encounter. The depression of his spirits was now become almost intolerable. "I would have a limb amputated," said he to Dr. Adams, "to recover my spirits." He was constantly tormented by harassing reflections on his inability to keep the many resolutions he had formed of leading a better life; and complained that a kind of strange oblivion had overspread him, so that he did not know what was become of the past year, and that incidents and intelligence passed over him without leaving any impression.

Neither change of place nor the society of friends availed to prevent or to dissipate this melancholy. In 1762, he made an excursion into Devonshire, with Sir Joshua Reynolds; the next year he went to Harwich, with Boswell; in the following, when his malady was most troublesome, the meeting which acquired the name of the Literary Club was instituted, and he passed a considerable time in Lincolnshire, with the father of Langton; and, in the year after, visited Cambridge, in the company of Beauclerk. Of the Literary Club, first proposed by Reynolds, the other members at its first establishment were Burke, Dr.

Nugent, Beauclerk, Langton, Goldsmith, Chamier, and Sir John Hawkins. They met at the Turk's Head, in Gerrard-street, Soho, one evening in the week, and usually remained together till a late hour. The society was afterwards extended, so as to comprise a large number of those who were most eminent, either for their learning or their station in life, and the place of meeting has been since at different times changed to other parts of the town, nearer to the Parliament House, or to the usual resorts of gaiety. A club was the delight of Johnson. We lose some of our awe for him, when we contemplate him as mimicked by his old scholar Garrick, in the act of squeezing a lemon into the punch-bowl, and asking, as he looks round the company, in his provincial accent, of which he never got entirely rid, "Who's for *poonch*?" If there was any thing likely to gratify him more than a new club, it was the public testimony of respect from a learned body; and this he received from Trinity College, Dublin, in a diploma for the degree of Doctor of Laws, an honour the more flattering, as it came without solicitation.

At the beginning of 1766, his faithful biographer, James Boswell, who had known him for three years, found him in a good house in Johnson's-court, Fleet-street, to which he had removed from lodgings in the Temple. By the advice of his physician, he had now begun to abstain from wine, and drank only water or

lemonade. He had brought two companions into his new dwelling, such as few other men would have chosen to enliven their solitude. On the ground floor was Miss Anna Williams, daughter of Zechariah Williams, a man who had practised physic in Wales, and, having come to England to seek the reward proposed by Parliament for the discovery of the longitude, had been assisted by Johnson in drawing up an account of the method he had devised. This plan was printed with an Italian translation, which is supposed to be Baretti's, on the opposite page; and a copy of the pamphlet, presented by Johnson to the Bodleian, is deposited in that library. Miss Williams had been a frequent visitor at Johnson's before the death of his wife, and having after that event, come under his roof to undergo an operation for a cataract on her eyes with more convenience than could have been had in her own lodgings, continued to occupy an apartment in his house, whenever he had one, till the time of her death. Her disease ended in total blindness, which gave her an additional claim on his benevolence. When he lived in the Temple, it was his custom, however late the hour, not to retire to rest until he had drunk tea with her in her lodgings in Bolt-court. One night when Goldsmith and Boswell were with him, Goldsmith strutted off in the company of Johnson, exclaiming with an air of superiority, "I go to Miss Williams," while Boswell slunk away in silent disappointment; but it

was not long, as Boswell adds, before he himself obtained the same mark of distinction. Johnson prevailed on Garrick to get her a benefit at the playhouse, and assisted her in preparing some poems she had written for the press, by both which means she obtained the sum of about £300. The interest of this, added to some small annual benefactions, probably hindered her from being any pecuniary burden to Johnson; and though she was apt to be peevish and impatient, her curiosity, the retentiveness of her memory, and the strength of her intellect, made her, on the whole, an agreeable companion to him. The other inmate, whose place was in one of his garrets, was Robert Levett, a practiser of physic among the lower people, grotesque in his appearance, formal in his manners, and silent before company: though little thought of by others, this man was so highly esteemed for his abilities by Johnson, that he was heard to say, he should not be satisfied though attended by all the College of Physicians, unless he had Levett with him. He must have been a useful assistant in the chemical processes with which Johnson was fond of amusing himself; and at one of which Murphy, on his first visit, found him in a little room, covered with soot like a chimney-sweeper, making æther. Beauclerk, with his lively exaggeration, used to describe Johnson at breakfast, throwing his crusts to Levett after he had eaten the crumb. The pathetic verses written by

Johnson on his death, which happened suddenly three years before his own, shew with what tenderness of affection he regarded Levett. Some time after (1778), to this couple, who did not live in much harmony together, were added Mrs. Desmoulins, the daughter of Dr. Swinfen his god-father, and widow of a writing-master; Miss Carmichael, and, as Boswell thought, a daughter also of Mrs. Desmoulins, all of whom were lodged in his house. To the widow he allowed half-a-guinea a week, the twelfth part, as Boswell observes, of his pension. It was sometimes more than he could do, to reconcile so many jarring interests. "Williams," says he, in a letter to Mrs. Thrale, "hates every body: Levett hates Desmoulins and does not love Williams: Desmoulins hates them both. Poll loves none of them." Poll was Miss Carmichael, of whom I do not find that any thing else is recorded. Boswell ventured to call this groupe the seraglio of Johnson, and escaped without a rebuke.

From these domestic feuds he would sometimes withdraw himself to the house of Mr. Thrale, at Streatham, an opulent brewer, with whom his acquaintance had begun in 1765. With this open-hearted man he was always sure of a welcome reception for as long a time as he chose; and the mistress of the house, though after the death of her first husband and her subsequent marriage to an Italian she somewhat ungraciously remembered the petty annoyances which

reader. The days of a scholar are frequently not distinguished by varieties even as unimportant as these. Johnson found his mind grow stagnant by a constant residence in the neighbourhood of Charing-cross itself, where he thought human happiness at its flood: and once, when moving rapidly along the road in a carriage with Boswell, cried out to his fellow-traveller, "Sir, life has few things better than this." In the winter of 1766 he went to Oxford, where he resided for a month, and formed an intimacy with Chambers, afterwards one of the judges in India. During this period, no publication appeared under his own name; but he furnished Miss Williams with a Preface to her Poems, and Adams with another for his Treatise on the Globes; and wrote the dedication to the King, prefixed to Gough's London and Westminster Improved. He seems to have been always ready to supply a dedication for a friend, a task which he executed with more than ordinary courtliness. In this way, he told Boswell, that he believed he "had dedicated to all the royal family round." But in his own case, either pride hindered him from prefixing to his works what he perhaps considered as a token of servility, or his better judgment restrained him from appropriating, by a particular inscription to one individual, that which was intended for the use of mankind.

Of Johnson's interview with George III. I shall transcribe the account as given by Boswell; with which

such pains were taken to make it accurate, that it was submitted before publication for the inspection of the King, by one of his principal secretaries of State.

In February, 1767, there happened one of the most remarkable incidents in Johnson's life which gratified his monarchical enthusiasm, and which he loved to relate with all its circumstances, when requested by his friends. This was his being honoured by a private conversation with his Majesty in the library at the Queen's house. He had frequently visited those splendid rooms, and noble collection of books, which he used to say was more numerous and curious than he supposed any person could have made in the time which the King had employed. Mr. Barnard, the librarian, took care that he should have every accommodation that could contribute to his ease and convenience, while indulging his literary taste in that place: so that he had here a very agreeable resource at leisure hours.

His Majesty having been informed of his occasional visits, was pleased to signify a desire that he should be told when Dr. Johnson came next to the library. Accordingly the next time that Johnson did come, as soon as he was fairly engaged with a book, on which, while he sat by the fire, he seemed quite intent, Mr. Barnard stole round to the apartment where the King was, and, in obedience to his Majesty's commands, mentioned that Dr. Johnson was then in the library. His Majesty said he was at leisure, and would go to him: upon which Mr. Barnard took one of the candles that stood on the King's table, and lighted his Majesty through a suite

of rooms, till they came to a private door into the library, of which his Majesty had the key. Being entered, Mr. Barnard stepped forward hastily to Dr. Johnson, who was still in a profound study, and whispered him, "Sir, here is the King." Johnson started up, and stood still. His Majesty approached him, and at once was courteously easy.

His Majesty began by observing, that he understood he came sometimes to the library; and then mentioning his having heard that the Doctor had been lately at Oxford, asked him if he was not fond of going thither. To which Johnson answered, that he was indeed fond of going to Oxford sometimes, but was likewise glad to come back again. The King then asked him what they were doing at Oxford. Johnson answered, he could not much commend their diligence, but that in some respects they were mended, for they had put their press under better regulations, and were at that time printing Polybius. He was then asked whether there were better libraries at Oxford or Cambridge. He answered, he believed the Bodleian was larger than any they had at Cambridge; at the same time adding, "I hope, whether we have more books or not than they have at Cambridge, we shall make as good use of them as they do." Being asked whether All-Souls or Christ-Church library was the largest, he answered, "All-Souls library is the largest we have, except the Bodleian." "Ay, (said the King,) that is the public library."

His Majesty inquired if he was then writing any thing. He answered, he was not, for he had pretty well told the world what he knew, and must now read to

acquire more knowledge. The King, as it should seem with a view to urge him to rely on his own stores as an original writer, and to continue his labours, then said, "I do not think you borrow much from any body." Johnson said, he thought he had already done his part as a writer. "I should have thought so too, (said the King,) if you had not written so well."—Johnson observed to me, upon this, that "No man could have paid a handsomer compliment; and it was fit for a King to pay. It was decisive." When asked by another friend, at Sir Joshua Reynolds's, whether he made any reply to this high compliment, he answered, "No, Sir. When the King had said it, it was to be so. It was not for me to bandy civilities with my Sovereign." Perhaps no man who had spent his whole life in courts could have shewn a more nice and dignified sense of true politeness than Johnson did in this instance.

His Majesty having observed to him that he supposed he must have read a great deal; Johnson answered, that he thought more than he read; that he had read a great deal in the early part of his life, but having fallen into ill health, he had not been able to read much, compared with others: for instance, he said, he had not read much, compared with Dr. Warburton. Upon which the King said, that he heard Dr. Warburton was a man of such general knowledge, that you could scarce talk with him on any subject on which he was not qualified to speak; and that his learning resembled Garrick's acting, in its universality. His Majesty then talked of the controversy between Warburton and Lowth, which he seemed to have read, and asked

Johnson what he thought of it. Johnson answered, "Warburton has most general, most scholastic learning; Lowth is the more correct scholar. I do not know which of them calls names best." The King was pleased to say he was of the same opinion; adding, "You do not think then, Dr. Johnson, that there was much argument in the case." Johnson said, he did not think there was. "Why truly, (said the King,) when once it comes to calling names, argument is pretty well at an end."

His Majesty then asked him what he thought of Lord Lyttelton's history, which was then just published. Johnson said, he thought his style pretty good, but that he had blamed Henry the Second rather too much. "Why, (said the King,) they seldom do these things by halves." "No, Sir, (answered Johnson,) not to Kings." But fearing to be misunderstood, he proceeded to explain himself: and immediately subjoined, "That for those who spoke worse of Kings than they deserved, he could find no excuse; but that he could more easily conceive how some might speak better of them than they deserved, without any ill intention; for, as Kings had much in their power to give, those who were favoured by them would frequently, from gratitude, exaggerate their praises: and as this proceeded from a good motive, it was certainly excusable, as far as errour could be excusable."

The King then asked him what he thought of Dr. Hill. Johnson answered that he was an ingenious man, but had no veracity; and immediately mentioned, as an instance of it, an assertion of that writer, that he

had seen objects magnified to a much greater degree by using three or four microscopes at a time than by using one. "Now, (added Johnson,) every one acquainted with microscopes knows, that the more of them he looks through, the less the object will appear." "Why, (replied the King,) this is not only telling an untruth, but telling it clumsily; for, if that be the case, every one who can look through a microscope will be able to detect him."

"I now, (said Johnson to his friends, when relating what had passed,) began to consider that I was depreciating this man in the estimation of his Sovereign, and thought it was time for me to say something that might be more favourable." He added, therefore, that Dr. Hill was, notwithstanding, a very curious observer; and if he would have been contented to tell the world no more than he knew, he might have been a very considerable man, and needed not to have recourse to such mean expedients to raise his reputation.

The King then talked of literary journals, mentioned particularly the "Journal des Savans," and asked Johnson if it was well done. Johnson said, it was formerly very well done, and gave some account of the persons who began it, and carried it on for some years: enlarging at the same time, on the nature and use of such works. The King asked him if it was well done now. Johnson answered, he had no reason to think that it was. The King then asked him if there were any other literary journal published in this kingdom, except the Monthly and Critical Reviews; and on being answered there was no other, his Majesty asked which of them was the best: Johnson answered that the Monthly

Review was done with most care, the Critical upon the best principles; adding that the authours of the Monthly Review were enemies to the Church. This the King said he was sorry to hear.

The conversation next turned on the Philosophical Transactions, when Johnson observed that they had now a better method of arranging their materials than formerly. "Ay, (said the King,) they are obliged to Dr. Johnson for that;" for his Majesty had heard and remembered the circumstance, which Johnson himself had forgot.

His Majesty expressed a desire to have the literary biography of this country ably executed, and proposed to Dr. Johnson to undertake it. Johnson signified his readiness to comply with his Majesty's wishes.

During the whole of this interview, Johnson talked to his Majesty with profound respect, but still in his firm manly manner, with a sonorous voice, and never in that subdued tone which is commonly used at the levee and in the drawing-room. After the King withdrew, Johnson shewed himself highly pleased with his Majesty's conversation and gracious behaviour. He said to Mr. Barnard, "Sir, they may talk of the King as they will; but he is the finest gentleman I have ever seen." And he afterwards observed to Mr. Langton, "Sir, his manners are those of as fine a gentleman as we may suppose Lewis the Fourteenth, or Charles the Second."

Nothing in this conversation betrays symptoms of that state which he complains of in his devotional record

(on the 2nd of August, 1767) when he says that he had been disturbed and unsettled for a long time, and had been without resolution to apply to study or to business. Half of this year he passed at a distance from the metropolis, and chiefly at Lichfield, where he prayed fervently by the death-bed of the old servant of his family, Catherine Chambers, leaving her with a fond farewell, and many tears. There was no greater proof of the goodness of Johnson's nature, than his attachment to his domestics. Soon after this he placed Francis Barber, a negro boy who waited on him, at a school at Hertfordshire; and, during his education there, encouraged him to good behaviour by frequent and very kind letters. It is on such occasions that we are ready to allow the justice of Goldsmith's vindication of his friend, that he had nothing of the bear but the skin.

In the two succeeding years he continued to labour under the same restlessness and anxiety; again sought for relief in a long visit to Oxford, and another to Brighthelmstone with the Thrales; and produced nothing but a Prologue to one of Goldsmith's comedies.

The repeated expulsion of Wilkes from his seat, by a vote of the House of Commons, had (in 1770) thrown the nation into a ferment. Johnson was roused to take the side of the ministry; and endeavoured in a pamphlet, called the False Alarm, as

much by ridicule as by argument, to support a violent and arbitrary measure. It appears, both from his conversation and his writings, that he thought there was a point at which resistance might become justifiable; and, surely it is more advisable to check the encroachments of power at their beginning, than to delay opposition, till it cannot be resorted to without greater hazard to the public safety. The ministry were happily compelled to give way. They were, however, glad to have so powerful an arm to fight their battles, and, in the next year (1771) employed him in a worthier cause. In his tract on the Falkland Islands, the materials for which were furnished him by Government, he appears to have much the better of the argument; for he has to shew the folly of involving the nation in a war for a questionable right, and a possession of doubtful advantage; but his invective against his opponents is very coarse; he does not perform the work of dissection neatly: he mangles rather than cuts. When he applies the word "gabble" to the elocution of Chatham, we are tempted to compare him to one of the baser fowl, spoken of by an ancient poet, that clamour against the bird of Jove.

Not many copies of this pamphlet had been dispersed, when Lord North stopped the sale, and caused some alterations to be made, for reasons which the author did not himself distinctly comprehend.

Johnson's own opinion of these two political essays was, that there was a subtlety of disquisition in the first, that was worth all the fire of the second. When questioned by Boswell as to the truth of a report that they had obtained for him an addition to his pension of 200*l.* a year, he answered that, excepting what had been paid him by the booksellers, he had not got a farthing for them.

About this time, there was a project for enabling him to take a more distinguished part in politics. The proposition for bringing him into the House of Commons came from Strahan the printer, who was himself one of the members; Boswell has preserved the letter in which this zealous friend to Johnson represented to one of the Secretaries of State the services which might reasonably be expected from his eloquence and fidelity. The reasons which rendered the application ineffectual have not been disclosed to us; but it may be questioned whether his powers of reasoning could have been readily called forth on a stage so different from any to which he had been hitherto accustomed; whether so late in life he could have obtained the habit of attending to speakers, sometimes dull, and sometimes perplexed; or whether that dictatorial manner which easily conquered opposition in a small circle, might not have been borne down by resentment or scorn in a large and mixed assembly. Johnson would most willingly have made the experiment; and when Reynolds re-

peated what Burke had said of him, that if he had come early into parliament, he would certainly have been the greatest speaker that ever was there, exclaimed, "I should like to try my hand now." That we may proceed without interruption to the end of Johnson's political career, it should here be told that he published (in 1774) a short pamphlet in support of his friend, Mr. Thrale, who at that time was one of the candidates in a contested election, and a zealous supporter of the government. But his devotion to the powers that be, never led him to so great lengths as in the following year (1775), when he wrote Taxation no Tyranny: an Answer to the Resolutions and Address of the American Congress. Now that we look back with impartiality and coolness to the subject of dispute between the mother country and her colonies, there are few, I believe, who do not acknowledge the Americans to have been driven into resistance by claims, which, if they were not palpably unlawful, were at least highly inexpedient and unjust. But Johnson was no statist. With the nature of man taken individually and in the detail, he was well acquainted; but of men as incorporated into society, of the relations between the governors and the governed, and of all the complicated interests of polity and of civil life, his knowledge was very limited. Biography was his favourite study; history, his aversion. Sooner than hear of the Punic war (says Murphy, he would be rude to

the person that introduced the subject; and, as he told Mr. Thrale, when a gentleman one day spoke to him at the club of Catiline's conspiracy, he withdrew his attention, and thought about Tom Thumb. In his Taxation no Tyranny, having occasion to notice a reference made by the American Congress to a passage in Montesquieu, he calls him in contempt the fanciful Montesquieu. Yet this is the man, of whom Burke, when his just horror of every thing fanciful in politics was at its height, has passed the noblest eulogium that one modern has ever made on another, and which the reader will pardon me if in my veneration for a great name I place here as an antidote to the detraction of Johnson.

Place before your eyes such a man as Montesquieu. Think of a genius not born in every country, or every time; a man gifted by nature with a penetrating aquiline eye; with a judgment prepared with the most extensive erudition; with an herculean robustness of mind, and nerves not to be broken with labour; a man who could spend twenty years in one pursuit. Think of a man, like the universal patriarch of Milton (who had drawn up before him in his prophetic vision, the whole series of the generations which were to issue from his loins), a man capable of placing in review, after having brought together, from the east, the west, the north, and the south, from the coarseness of the rudest barbarism, to the most refined and subtle civilization, all the schemes of government which had ever

prevailed amongst mankind, weighing, measuring, collating, and comparing them all, joining fact with theory, and calling into council, upon all this infinite assemblage of things, all the speculations which have fatigued the understandings of profound reasoners in all times! Let us then consider that all these were but so many preparatory steps to qualify a man, and such a man, tinctured with no national prejudice, with no domestic affection to admire, and to hold out to the admiration of mankind the constitution of England.—*Appeal from the New to the Old Institutes, at the end.*

It is to be feared, that the diploma of Doctor of Laws, which was sent to Johnson in the same year (1775), at the recommendation of Lord North, at that time Chancellor of the University, and Prime Minister, was in some measure intended to be the reward of his obsequiousness. In this instrument, he is called, with an hyperbole of praise which the University would perhaps now be more cautious of applying to any individual, "In Literarum Republica Princeps jam et Primarius."

He had long meditated a visit to Scotland, in the company of Boswell, and was, at length (in 1773), prevailed on to set out. Where he went, and what he saw and heard, is sufficiently known by the relation which he gave the world next year, in his Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland, and in his letters to Mrs. Thrale. It cannot be said of him, as

he has said of Gray, that whoever reads his narrative wishes that to travel and to tell his travels had been more of his employment. He seems to have proceeded on his way, with the view of finding something at every turn, on which to exercise his powers of argument or of raillery. His mind is scarcely ever passive to the objects it encounters, but shapes them to his own moods. After we lay down his book, little impression is left of the places through which he has passed, and a strong one of his own character. With his fellow-traveller, though kindness sometimes made him over-officious, he was so well pleased, as to project a voyage up the Baltic, and a visit to the northern countries of Europe, in his society. He had before indulged himself with a visionary scheme of sailing to Iceland, with his friend Bathurst. In 1774, he went with the Thrales to the extremity of North Wales. A few trifling memoranda of this journey, which were found among his papers, have been lately published; but, as he wrote to Boswell, he found the country so little different from England, that it offered nothing to the speculation of a traveller. Such was his apathy in a land

> Where each old poetic mountain
> Inspiration breathes around,
> Every shade and hallow'd fountain
> Murmurs deep a solemn sound.

In the following year (1775) he made his usual visit to the midland counties, and accompanied the Thrales in a Tour to Paris, from whence they returned by way of Rouen. This was the only time he was on the Continent. It is to be regretted that he left only some imperfect notes of his Journey; for there could scarcely have failed to be something that would have gratified our curiosity in his observations on the manners of a foreign country. We find him in the next year (1776) removing from Johnson's Court, No. 7, to Bolt Court, Fleet-street, No. 8; from whence at different times he made excursions to Lichfield and Ashbourne; to Bath with the Thrales; and, in the autumn, to Brighthelmstone, where Mr. Thrale had a house. This gentleman had, for some time, fed his expectations with the prospect of a journey to Italy. "A man," said Johnson, "who has not been in Italy, is always conscious of an inferiority, from his not having seen what it is expected a man should see. The grand object of travelling is to see the shores of the Mediterranean. All our religion, almost all our law, almost all our arts, almost all that sets us above savages, has come to us from the shores of the Mediterranean." Much as he had set his heart on this journey, and magnificent as his conceptions were of the promised land, he was employed with more advantage to his own country at home; for, at the solicitation of the booksellers, he

now (1777) undertook to write the Lives of the English Poets. The judicious selection of the facts which he relates, the vivacity of the narrative, the profoundness of the observations, and the terseness of the style, render this the most entertaining, as it is, perhaps, the most instructive of his works. His criticisms, indeed, often betray either the want of a natural perception for the higher beauties of poetry, or a taste unimproved by the diligent study of the most perfect models; yet they are always acute, lucid, and original. That his judgment is often warped by a political bias can scarcely be doubted; but there is no good reason to suspect that it is ever perverted by malevolence or envy. The booksellers left it to him to name his price, which he modestly fixed at 200 guineas; though, as Mr. Malone says, 1000 or 1500 would have been readily given if he had asked it. As he proceeded, the work grew on his hands. In 1781 it was completed; and another 100*l*. was voluntarily added to the sum which had been at first agreed on. In the third edition, which was called for in 1783, he made several alterations and additions; of which, to shew the unreasonableness of murmurs respecting improved editions, it is related in the Biographical Dictionary,* on the information of Mr. Nichols, that though they were printed

* Vol. xix. p. 71. Ed. 1815.

separately, and offered gratis to the purchasers of the former editions, scarcely a single copy was demanded.

This was the last of his literary labours; nor do we hear of his writing any thing for the press in the meanwhile, except such slight compositions as a prologue for a comedy by Mr. Hugh Kelly, and a dedication to the King of the Posthumous Works of Pearce, Bishop of Rochester.

His body was weighed down with disease, and his mind clouded with apprehensions of death. He sought for respite from these sufferings in the usual means—in short visits to his native place, or to Brighthelmstone, and in the establishment of new clubs. In 1781, another of these societies was, by his desire, formed in the city. It was to meet at the Queen's Arms, in St. Paul's Churchyard; and his wish was, that no patriot should be admitted. He now returned to the use of wine, which, when he did take it, he swallowed greedily.

About this time Mr. Thrale died, leaving Johnson one of his executors, with a legacy of 200*l*. The death of Levett, in the same year, and of Miss Williams, in 1783, left him yet more lonely. A few months before the last of these deprivations befel him, he had a warning of his own dissolution, which he could not easily mistake. The night of the 16th of June, on which day he had been sitting for his picture, he perceived himself, soon after going to bed,

to be seized with a sudden confusion and indistinctness in his head, which seemed to him to last about half a minute. His first fear was lest his intellect should be affected. Of this he made experiment, by turning into Latin verse a short prayer, which he had breathed out for the averting of that calamity. The lines were not good, but he knew that they were not so, and concluded his faculties to be unimpaired. Soon after he was conscious of having suffered a paralytic stroke, which had taken away his speech. "I had no pain," he observed afterwards, "and so little dejection in this dreadful state, that I wondered at my own apathy, and considered, that perhaps death itself, when it should come, would excite less horror than seems now to attend it." In hopes of stimulating the vocal organs, he swallowed two drams, and agitated his body into violent motion, but it was to no purpose; whereupon he returned to his bed, and, as he thought, fell asleep. In the morning, finding that he had the use of his hand, he was in the act of writing a note to his servant, when the man entered. He then wrote a card to his friend and neighbour, Mr. Allen, the printer, but not without difficulty, his hand sometimes, he knew not why, making a different letter from that which he intended; his next care was to acquaint Dr. Taylor, his old schoolfellow, and now a prebendary of Westminster, with his condition, and to desire he would come and

bring Dr. Heberden with him. At the same time, he sent in for Dr. Brocklesby, who was his near neighbour. The next day his speech was restored, and he perceived no deterioration, either in his memory or understanding. In the following month he was well enough to pass a week at Rochester, with Mr. Langton, and to appear again at the Literary Club; and at the end of August, to make a visit to Mr. Bowles, at Heale, near Salisbury, where he continued about three weeks.

On his return to London, he was confined to the house by a fit of the gout, a disorder which had once attacked him, but with less violence, ten years before, and to which he was now reconciled, by being taught to consider it as an antagonist to the palsy. To this was added, a sarcocele, which, as it threatened to render excision necessary, caused him more uneasiness, though he looked forward to the operation with sufficient courage; but the complaint subsided of itself.

When he was able to go about again, that society might be insured to him at least three days in the week, another club was founded at the Essex Head, in Essex street, where an old servant of Mr. Thrale's was the landlord. "Its principles (he said) were to be laid in frequency and frugality; and he drew up a set of rules, which he prefaced with two lines from a Sonnet of Milton.

To-day resolve deep thoughts with me to drench,
In mirth that after no repenting draws."

The number was limited to twenty-four. Each member present engaged himself to spend at least sixpence; and, to pay a forfeit of three-pence if he did not attend. But even here, in the club-room, after his sixpence was duly laid down, and the arm chair taken, there was no security for him against the intrusion of those maladies which had so often assailed him. On the first night of meeting (13th of December, 1783) he was seized with a spasmodic asthma, and hardly made his way home to his own house, where the dropsy combined with asthma to hold him a prisoner for more than four months. An occurrence during his illness, which he mentioned to Boswell, deserves notice, from the insight which it gives into his peculiar frame of mind. "He had shut himself up, and employed a day in particular exercises of religion—fasting, humiliation, and prayer. On a sudden, he obtained extraordinary relief, for which he looked up to heaven with grateful devotion. He made no direct inference from the fact; but from his manner of telling it," adds Boswell, "I could perceive that it appeared to him as something more than an incident in the common course of events." Yet at this time, with all his aspirations after a state of greater perfectness, he was not able to bear the candour of Langton, who, when Johnson him desired to

tell him sincerely wherein he had observed his life to be faulty, brought him a sheet of paper, on which were written many texts of Scripture, recommendatory of Christian meekness.

At the beginning of June he had sufficiently rallied his strength to set out with Boswell, for Oxford, where he remained about a fortnight, with Dr. Adams, the master of Pembroke, his old college. In his discourse, there was the same alternation of gloominess and gaiety, the same promptness of repartee, and keenness of sarcasm, as there had ever been.

Several of his friends were now anxious that he should escape the rigour of an English winter by repairing to Italy, a measure which his physicians recommended, not very earnestly indeed, and more I think in compliance with his known wishes, than in expectation of much benefit to his health. It was thought requisite, however, that some addition should previously be made to his income, in order to his maintaining an appearance somewhat suitable to the character which he had established throughout Europe by his writings. For this purpose, Boswell addressed an application to the Ministry, through Lord Thurlow, who was then Chancellor. After some accidental delay, and some unsuccessful negotiation on the part of Lord Thurlow, who was well disposed to befriend him, during which time Johnson was again buoyed up with the prospect of visiting Italy, an an-

swer was returned which left him no reason to expect from Government any further assistance than that which he was then receiving in the pension already granted him. This refusal the Chancellor accompanied with a munificent offer of supply out of his own purse, which he endeavoured to convey in such a manner as should least alarm the independent spirit of Johnson. "It would be a reflection on us all, (said Thurlow,) if such a man should perish for want of the means to take care of his health." The abilities of Thurlow had always been held in high estimation by Johnson, who had been heard to say of him, "I would prepare myself for no man in England but Lord Thurlow. When I am to meet with him, I should wish to know a day before." One day, while this scheme was pending, Johnson being at the house of Sir Joshua Reynolds, was overcome by the tenderness of his friends, and by the near view, as he thought, of this long-hoped Italian tour being effected, and exclaimed with much emotion, "God bless you all;" and then, after a short silence, again repeating the words in a form yet more solemn, was no longer able to command his feelings, but hurried away to regain his composure in solitude.

After all these efforts, Johnson was fated to disappointment; and the authors of his disappointment have incurred the sentence denounced on them by the humanity of Thurlow. In this, Dr. Brocklesby, the

physician, has no share; for by him a noble offer of £100. a year was made to Johnson during his life.

In the meantime he had paid the summer visit, which had now become almost an annual one to his daughter-in-law, at Lichfield, from whence he made an excursion to Dr. Taylor's, at Ashbourne, and to Chatsworth, still labouring under his asthma, but willing to believe that as Floyer, the celebrated physician of his native city, had been allowed to pant on till near ninety, so he might also yet pant on a little longer. Whilst he was on this journey, he translated an ode of Horace, and composed several prayers. As he passed through Birmingham and Oxford, he once more hailed his old schoolfellow Hector, and his fellow collegian, Adams. It is delightful to see early intimacies thus enduring through all the accidents of life, local attachments unsevered by time, and the old age and childhood of man bound together by these natural charities. The same willow tree which Johnson had known when a boy, was still his favourite, and still flourishing in the meadow, near Lichfield. Hector (whom I can remember several years after, a man of erect form, and grave deportment) still met him with the same, or perhaps more cordiality than in their first days; and the virtues of Adams, which he had seen opening in their early promise, had now grown up to full maturity. To London he returned, only to prove that death was not the terrible thing which he

had fancied it. He arrived there on the 15th of November. In little more than a fortnight after, when Dr. Brocklesby (with whom three other eminent physicians, and a chirurgeon, were in the habit of attending him gratuitously) was paying him a morning visit, he said that he had been as a dying man all night, and then with much emphasis repeated the words of Macbeth:

> Canst thou not minister to a mind diseased;
> Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow;
> Raze out the written troubles of the brain
> And, with some sweet oblivious antidote,
> Cleanse the foul bosom of that perilous stuff
> Which weighs upon the heart?

To which Brocklesby promptly returned the answer, which is made by the doctor in that play,

> ——Therein the patient
> Must minister unto himself.

He now committed to the flames a large mass of papers, among which were two 4to. volumes, containing a particular account of his life, from his earliest recollections.

His few remaining days were occasionally cheered by the presence of such men as have been collected about a death-bed in few ages and countries of the world—Langton, Reynolds, Windham, and Burke.

Of these, none was more attentive to him than Mr. Langton, of whom he had been heard to say, I could almost wish "anima mea sit cum Langtono," and whom he now addressed in the tender words of Tibullus,

Te teneam moriens deficiente manu.

At another time, Burke, who was sitting with him in the company of four or five others, expressed his fear that so large a number might be oppressive to him, "No, Sir," said Johnson, "it is not so; and I must be in a wretched state, indeed, when your company would not be a delight to me." Burke's voice trembled, when he replied, "My dear Sir, you have always been too good to me." These were the last words that passed between them. Mr. Windham having settled a pillow for him, he thanked him for his kindness.

This will do (said he,) all that a pillow can do. Of Sir Joshua Reynolds he made three requests, which were readily granted; to forgive him thirty pounds which he had borrowed of him; to read the Bible; and never to use his pencil on a Sunday. The church service was frequently read to him by some clergyman of his acquaintance. On one of these occasions, when Mr. Nichols was present, he cried out to Mr. Hoole, who was reading the Litany, "Louder, my dear Sir, louder, I entreat you, or you pray in vain;" and when the ser-

vice was done, he turned to a lady who had come to pray with him, and said to her with much earnestness, "I thank you, Madam, very heartily, for your kindness in joining me in this solemn service. Live well, I conjure you, and you will not feel the compunction at the last which I now feel."

He entreated Dr. Brocklesby to dismiss any vain speculative opinions that he might entertain, and to settle his mind on the great truths of Christianity. He then insisted on his writing down the purport of their conversation; and when he had done, made him affix his signature to the paper, and urged him to keep it for the remainder of his life. The following is the account communicated to Boswell by this affectionate physician, who was very free from any suspicion of fanaticism, as indeed is well shewn by Johnson's discourse with him.

"For some time before his death, all his fears were calmed and absorbed by the prevalence of his faith, and his trust in the merits and propitiation of Jesus Christ." "He talked often to me about the necessity of faith in the sacrifice of Jesus, as necessary beyond all good works whatever, for the salvation of mankind." "He pressed me to study Dr. Clarke, and to read his Sermons. I asked him why he pressed Dr. Clarke, an Arian. 'Because (said he) he is fullest on the propitiatory sacrifice.'" This was the more remarkable, because his prejudice against

Clarke, on account of the Arianism imputed to him, had formerly been so strong, that he made it a rule not to admit his name into his Dictionary.

He desired Dr. Brocklesby to tell him whether he could recover, charging him to give a direct answer. The Doctor having first asked whether he could bear to hear the whole truth, told him that without a miracle he could not recover. "Then," said Johnson, "I will take no more physic, or even opiates; for I have prayed that I may render up my soul to God unclouded." He not only kept this resolution, but abstained from all food, excepting such as was of the weakest kind. When Mr. Windham pressed him to take something more generous, lest too poor a diet should produce the effects which he dreaded, "I will take any thing," said he, "but inebriating sustenance."

Mr. Strahan, the clergyman, who administered to him the comforts of religion, affirmed that after having been much agitated, he became tranquil, and continued so to the last.

On the eighth and ninth of December, he made his will, by which he bequeathed the chief of his property to Francis Barber, his negro servant. The value of this legacy is estimated by Sir John Hawkins, at near £1500. From this time he languished on till the twelfth. That night his bodily uneasiness increased; his attendants assisted him every hour to

raise himself in his bed, and move his legs, which were in much pain; each time he prayed fervently; the only support he took was cyder and water. He said he was prepared, but the time to his dissolution seemed long. At six in the morning he inquired the hour; and, being told, observed that all went on regularly, and that he had but a few hours to live. In two hours after, he ordered his servant to bring him a drawer, out of which he chose one lancet, from amongst some others, and pierced his legs; and then seizing a pair of scissars that lay near him, plunged them into both his calves, no doubt with the hopes of easing them of the water; for he had often reproached his medical attendants with want of courage in not scarifying them more deeply. At ten he dismissed Mr. Windham's servant, who was one of those who had sat up with him, thanking him, and desiring him to bear his remembrance to his master. Afterwards a Miss Morris, the daughter of one of his friends, came into the room to beg his blessing; of which, being informed by his servant Francis, he turned round in his bed, and said to her, "God bless you, my dear." About seven in the evening he expired so quietly, that those about him did not perceive his departure. His body being opened, two of the valves of the aorta were found to be ossified; the air cells of the lungs unusually distended; one of the kidneys consumed, and the liver schirrous. A stone, as

large as a common gooseberry, was in the gall-bladder.

On the 20th of December, he was interred in Westminster Abbey, under a blue flagstone, which bears this inscription.

Samuel Johnson, LLD.
Obiit XIII. die Decembris,
Anno Domini
MDCCLXXXIV.
Ætatis suæ LXXV.

He was attended to his grave by many of his friends, particularly such members of the Literary Club as were then in London; the pall being borne by Burke, Sir Joseph Banks, Windham, Langton, Sir Charles Bunbury, and Colman. Monuments have been erected to his memory, in the cathedrals of Lichfield and St. Paul's. That in the latter consists of his statue, by Bacon, larger than life, with an epitaph from the pen of Dr. Parr.

A — Ω
Samueli Johnson
Grammatico et Critico
Scriptorum Anglicorum litterate perito
Poetæ luminibus sententiarum
Et ponderibus verborum admirabili
Magistro virtutis gravissimo
Homini optimo et singularis exempli.

Qui vixit ann. lxxv. Mens. il. Dieb. xiiiii.
Decessit idib. Dec. ann. Christ. clɔ. lɔcc. lxxxiiii.
Sepult. in AED. Sanct. Petr. Westmonasteriens.
xiii. Kal. Januar. Ann. Christ. clɔ. lɔcc. lxxxv.
Amici et Sodales Litterarii
Pecunia Conlata
H. M. Faciund. Curaver.

In the hand there is a scroll, with the following inscription :—

ΕΝΜΑΚΑΡΕΣΣΙΠΟΝΩΑΝΤΑΞΙΟΣ ΕΙΗΑΜΟΙΒΗ.

Besides the numerous and various works which he executed, he had at different times, formed schemes or a great many more, of which the following catalogue was given by him to Mr. Langton, and by that gentleman presented to his Majesty.

Divinity.

A small Book of Precepts and Directions for Piety; the hint taken from the directions in Morton's exercise.

Philosophy, History, and Literature in general.

History of Criticism, as it relates to judging of authors, from Aristotle to the present age. An account of the rise and improvements of that art: of the different opinions of authors, ancient and modern.

Translation of the History of Herodian.

New Edition of Fairfax's Translation of Tasso, with notes, glossary, &c.

Chaucer, a new edition of him, from manuscripts and old editions, with various readings, conjectures, remarks on his language, and the changes it had undergone from the earliest times to his age, and from his to the present; with notes, explanatory of customs, &c. and references to Boccace, and other authors from whom he has borrowed, with an account of the liberties he has taken in telling the stories; his life, and an exact etymological glossary.

Aristotle's Rhetoric, a translation of it into English.

A Collection of Letters, translated from the modern writers, with some account of the several authors.

Oldham's Poems, with notes, historical and critical.

Roscommon's Poems, with notes.

Lives of the Philosophers, written with a polite air, in such a manner as may divert as well as instruct.

History of the Heathen Mythology, with an explication of the fables, both allegorical and historical; with references to the poets.

History of the State of Venice, in a compendious manner.

Aristotle's Ethics, an English translation of them, with notes.

Geographical Dictionary, from the French.

Hierocles upon Pythagoras, translated into English, perhaps with notes. This is done by Norris.

A Book of Letters, upon all kinds of subjects.

Claudian, a new edition of his works, "cum notis variorum," in the manner of Burman.

Tully's Tusculan Questions, a translation of them.

Tully's De Naturâ Deorum, a translation of those books.

Benzo's New History of the New World, to be translated.

Machiavel's History of Florence, to be translated.

History of the Revival of Learning in Europe, containing an account of whatever contributed to the restoration of literature; such as controversies, printing, the destruction of the Greek empire, the encouragement of great men, with the lives of the most eminent patrons, and most eminent early professors of all kinds of learning in different countries.

A Body of Chronology, in verse, with historical notes.

A Table of the Spectators, Tatlers, and Guardians, distinguished by figures into six degrees of value, with notes, giving the reasons of preference or degradation.

A Collection of Letters from English Authors, with a preface, giving some account of the writers; with reasons for selection, and criticism upon styles; remarks on each letter, if needful.

A Collection of Proverbs from various languages.—Jan. 6—53.

A Dictionary to the Common Prayer, in imitation of Calmet's Dictionary of the Bible.—March,—52.

A Collection of Stories and Examples, like those of Valerius Maximus.—Jan. 10,—53.

From Elian, a volume of select Stories, perhaps from others.—Jan. 28,—53.

Collection of Travels, Voyages, Adventures, and Descriptions of Countries.

Dictionary of Ancient History and Mythology.

Treatise on the Study of Polite Literature, containing the history of learning, directions for editions, commentaries, &c.

Maxims, Characters, and Sentiments, after the manner of Bruyere, collected out of ancient authors, particularly the Greek, with Apophthegms.

Classical Miscellanies, select translations from ancient Greek and Latin authors.

Lives of Illustrious Persons, as well of the active as the learned, in imitation of Plutarch.

Judgment of the learned upon English Authors.

Poetical Dictionary of the English Tongue.

Considerations upon the Present State of London.

Collection of Epigrams, with notes and observations.

Observations on the English Language, relating to words, phrases, and modes of speech.

Minutiæ Literariæ; miscellaneous reflections, criticisms, emendations, notes.

History of the Constitution.

Comparison of Philosophical and Christian Morality, by sentences collected from the moralists and fathers.

Plutarch's Lives, in English, with notes.

Poetry, and Works of Imagination.

Hymn to Ignorance.

The Palace of Sloth, a vision.

Coluthus, to be translated.

Prejudice, a poetical Essay.

The Palace of Nonsense, a vision.

In his last illness, he told Mr. Nichols* that he had thought of translating Thuanus, and when that wor-

* Nichols's Literary Anecdotes, vol. ii. p. 532.

thy man (in whom he had begun to place much confidence) suggested to him that he would be better employed in writing a Life of Spenser, by which he might gratify the King, who was known to be fond of that poet, he replied that he would readily do it if he could obtain any new materials.

His stature was unusually high, and his person large and well-proportioned, but he was rendered uncouth in his appearance by the scars which his scrophulous disease had impressed upon him, by convulsive motions, and by the slovenliness of his garb. His eyes, of which the sight was very imperfect, were of a light grey colour, yet had withal a wildness and penetration, and at times a fierceness of expression, that could not be encountered without a sensation of fear. He had a strange way of making inarticulate sounds, or of muttering to himself in a voice loud enough to be overheard, what was passing in his thoughts, when in company. Thus, one day, when he was on a visit to Davies the bookseller, whose pretty wife is spoken of by Churchill, he was heard repeating part of the Lord's Prayer, and, on his saying, lead us not into temptation, Davies turned round, and whispered his wife, "You are the occasion of this, my dear."

It is said by Boswell, that "his temperament was so morbid, that he never knew the natural joy of a free and vigorous use of his limbs: when he walked,

it was the struggling gait of one in fetters; when he rode, he had no command or direction of his horse, but was carried as if in a balloon." His daily habits were exceedingly irregular; he took his meals at unusual hours; and either ate voraciously, or abstained rigorously. He studied by fits and starts; but when he did read, it was with such rapidity and eagerness, that, as some one said, it seemed as if he would tear out the heart of the book he was upon. He could with difficulty believe any one who spoke of having read any book from the beginning to the end. His mode of composition was in like manner vigorous and hasty; though his sentences have all the appearance of being measured; but it was his custom to speak no less than to write with a studious attention to the numerousness of his phrase, so that he was enabled to do that by habit which others usually accomplish by a particular effort.

In matters of fact, his regard to truth was so punctilious, that it was observed he always talked as if he was talking upon oath; and he was desirous of exacting the same preciseness from those over whom he had authority or influence. He had, however, a practice that was not entirely consistent with this love of veracity; for he would sometimes defend that side of a question, which he thought wrong, because it afforded him a more favourable opportunity of exhibiting his reasoning or his wit. Thus when he

began, "Why, Sir, as to the good or evil of card-playing;" Garrick would make this arch comment on his proem; "Now he is considering which side he shall take." It may be urged that his hearers were aware of this propensity which he had

——To make the worse appear
The better argument,

and were therefore in no danger of being misled by it. But an excuse of the same kind will serve for the common liar, that he is known, and therefore disbelieved. It behoved him to be the more scrupulous in this particular, because he knew that Boswell took minutes of his ordinary conversation. Some of his idle sophisms, which thus became current, have, I fear, led to serious mischief; such as the opinion that an author may be at liberty to deny his having written a book to which he has not affixed his name; his extenuation of incontinence in the master of a family, and the gloss he put on the crime of covetousness; which last error was not confined to his conversation, but mingled itself with his writings, though no one could well be freer from any taint of the vice in his own life. Many a man may have indulged his inclinations to evil, with much less compunction, while he has imagined himself sheltered under the sanction of the moralist who watches one side of the entrance into the nave of St. Paul's.

There was, in his mind, a strange mixture of credulity and doubtfulness. He did not disbelieve either in the existence of ghosts, or in the possibility of commuting other metals into gold; but was very slow to credit any fact that was at all extraordinary. He would tell of Cave's having seen an apparition, without much apparent doubt; and, with more certainty, of his having been himself addressed by the voice of his absent mother. The deception practised by the girl in Cock Lane, who was a ventriloquist, is well known to have wrought on him so successfully, as to make him go and watch in the church, where she pretended the spirit of a young woman to be, which had disclosed to her the manner of its having been violently separated from the body. On this occasion, Boswell endeavours in vain to clear him from the imputation of a weakness, which was but too agreeable to the rest of his character. Yet on Hume's argument against miracles, that it is more probable witnesses should lie or be mistaken than that they should happen, he remarked, as I think, very judiciously, that Hume, taking the proposition simply, is right; but that the Christian revelation is not proved by the miracles alone, but as they are connected with prophecies, and with the doctrines in confirmation of which the miracles were wrought.

He was devout, moral, and humane; frequent and

earnest in his petitions for the divine succour, anxious to sublime his nature by disengaging it from worldly soil, and prompt to sympathise with the sorrows, and out of his scanty means, to relieve the necessities of others; but such is the imperfection of man, that his piety was apt to degenerate into superstition; his abstinence yielded to slight temptations, and his charity was often not proof against a discrepancy of opinion either in politics or literature.

Among his friends, Beauclerk seems most to have engaged his love, Langton his respect, and Burke his admiration. The first was conspicuous for wit, liveliness of feelings, and gaiety; the next for rectitude of conduct, piety, and learning; the last for knowledge, sagacity, and eloquence. His praise of Reynolds, that he was the most invulnerable of men, one of whom, if he had a quarrel with him, he should find it the most difficult to say any ill, was praise rather of the negative kind. The younger Warton, he contrived to alienate from him, as is related in the life of that poet. There was, indeed, an entire harmony in their political principles; but questions of literature touch an author yet more sensibly than those of state; and the "idem sentire de republicâ," was an imperfect bond of amity between men who appreciated so differently the Comus and Lycidas of Milton, and the Bucolics of Theocritus. To Savage and Goldsmith he was attached by similarity of for-

tunes and pursuits. A yet closer bond of sympathy united him with Collins, as the reader will see in the following extracts from letters which he wrote to Dr. Warton.

How little can we exult in any intellectual powers or literary entertainments, when we see the fate of poor Collins. I knew him a few years ago, full of hopes and full of projects, versed in many languages, high in fancy, and strong in retention. This busy and forcible mind is now under the government of those who lately would not have been able to comprehend the least and most narrow of its designs.—March 8, 1754.

Poor dear Collins. Let me know whether you think it would give him pleasure that I should write to him. I have often been near his state, and therefore have it in great commisseration. * * *

What becomes of poor dear Collins? I wrote him a letter which he never answered. I suppose writing is very troublesome to him. That man is no common loss. The moralists all talk of the uncertainty of fortune, and the transitoriness of beauty; but it is yet more dreadful to consider that the powers of the mind are equally liable to change, that understanding may make its appearance, and depart, that it may blaze and expire.—April 15, 1756.*

Difference of opinion respecting the American war did not separate him from Burke and Fox; and

* Wooll's Memoirs of Dr. Joseph Warton.

when the nation was afterwards divided by the struggle between the court and populace on one side and the aristocracy on the other, though his principles determined him to that party in which he found the person though perhaps not the interests of his sovereign, yet his affections continued with the great leader in the House of Commons, who was opposed to it. "I am," said he, "for the King against Fox; but I am for Fox against Pitt. The King is my master; bu I do not know Pitt; and Fox is my friend;" and to Burke, when he was a candidate for a seat in the new Parliament, he wished, as he told him with a smile, "all the success that an honest man could wish him." Even towards Wilkes his asperity was softened down into good humour by their meeting together over a plentiful table at the house of Dilly the bookseller.

When he had offended any by contradiction or rudeness, it was seldom long before he sought to be reconciled and forgiven. But though his private enmities were easily appeased, yet where he considered the cause of truth to be concerned, his resentment was vehement and unrelenting. That imposture, particularly, which he with good reason supposed Macpherson to have practised on the world with respect to the poems of Ossian, provoked him to vengeance, such as the occasion seemed hardly to demand.

Of his dry pleasantry in conversation there are many instances recorded. When one of his acquaintances had introduced him to his brother, at the same time telling him that he would find him become very agreeable after he had been some time in his company, he replied, "Sir, I can wait." To a stupid justice of the peace, who had wearied him with a long account of his having caused four convicts to be condemned to transportation, he answered, "I heartily wish I were a fifth;" a repartee that calls to our mind Horace's answer to the impertinent fellow:

Omnes composui; Felices! nunc ego resto.

A physician endeavouring to bring to his recollection that he had been in his company once before, mentioned among other circumstances his having that day worn so fine a coat, that it could not but have attracted his notice. "Sir," said Johnson, "had you been dipped in Pactolus, I should not have noticed you." He could on occasion be more polite and complimentary. When Mrs. Siddons, with whom, in a letter to Mrs. Thrale, he expressed himself highly pleased, paid him a visit, there happened not to be any chair ready for her. "Madam," said he, "you who so often occasion the want of seats to others will the more readily excuse the want of one yourself."

His scholarship was rather various than accurate

or profound. Yet Dr. Burney, the younger, supposed him capable of giving a Greek word for almost every English one. Romances were always a favourite kind of reading with him. Felixmarte of Hircania was his regular study during part of a summer which he spent in the country at the parsonage-house of Dr. Percy. On a journey to Derbyshire, when he had in view his Italian expedition, he took with him Il Palermino d'Inghilterra, to refresh his knowledge of the language. To this taste he had been heard to impute his unsettled disposition, and his averseness from the choice of any profession. One of the most singular qualities of his mind was the rapidity with which it was able to seize and master almost any subject, however abstruse or novel, that was offered to its speculation. To this quickness of apprehension was joined an extraordinary power of memory, so that he was able to recall at pleasure most passages of a book, which had once strongly impressed him. In his sixty-fouth year, he attempted to acquire the low Dutch language. He had a perpetual thirst of knowledge; and six months before his death requested Dr. Burney to teach him the scale of music. "Teach me," said Johnson to him, "at least, the alphabet of your language." What he knew, he loved to communicate. According to that description of the stu- in Chaucer,

Gladly would he teach, and gladly learn.

These endowments were accompanied with a copiousness of words, in which it would be difficult to name any writer except Barrow that has surpassed him. Yet his prose style is very far from affording a model that can safely be proposed for our imitation. He seems to exert his powers of intellect and of language indiscriminately, and with equal effort, on the smallest and the most important occasions; and the effect is something similar to that of a Chinese painting, in which, though all the objects separately taken are accurately described, yet the whole is entirely wanting in a proper relief of perspective. What is observed by Milton of the conduct of life, may be applied to composition, "that there is a scale of higher and lower duties," and he who confuses it will infallibly fall short of that proportion which is necessary to excellence no less in matters of taste than of morals.

He was more intent in balancing the period, than in developing the thought or image that was present to his mind. Sometimes we find that he multiplies words without amplifying the sense, and that the ear is gratified at the expense of the understanding. This is more particularly the case in the Ramblers, which being called for at short and stated intervals, were sometimes composed in such haste, that he had not leasure even to read them before they were printed; nor can we wonder at the dissatisfaction he expressed some years afterwards, when he exclaimed that he

thought they had been better. In the Idler there is more brevity, and consequently more compression.

When Johnson trusts to his own strong understanding in a matter of which he has the full command, and does not aim at setting it off by futile decorations, he is always respectable, and sometimes great. But when he attempts the ornamental, he is heavy and inelegant; and the awkwardness of his efforts is more perceptible from the hugeness of the body that is put in motion to produce them. He is like the animal whom Milton describes as making sport for our first parents in Paradise—

> ———Th' unwieldy elephant,
> To make them mirth, used all his might.

It is a good beast for carrying a burden or trampling down a foe, but a very indifferent one at a lavolta or a coranto.

His swelling style is readily counterfeited. Our common advertisements have amply revenged themselves for his ridicule of their large promises in the Idler, by clothing those promises in language as magnificent as his own. It is much less easy to catch the subtle graces of Addison. At the conclusion of the Rambler, he boasts that "he has laboured to refine our language to grammatical purity, and to clear it from colloquial barbarisms, licentious idioms, and irregular combinations."

The result of his labour is awkward stateliness and irksome uniformity. In his dread of incongruous idioms he writes almost without any idiom at all.

He has sometimes been considered as having innovated on our tongue by introducing big words into it from the Latin: but he commonly does no more than revive terms which had been employed by our old writers and afterwards fallen into disuse; nor does he, like them, employ even these terms in senses which scholars only would be likely to understand.

At the time of writing the Dictionary, he had a notion that our language "for almost a century had been departing from its original Teutonic character, and deviating towards a Gallic structure and phraseology, from which it ought to be our endeavour to recall it by making our ancient volumes the ground-work of style, admitting among the additions of later times, only such as may supply real deficiencies, such as are readily adopted by the genius of our tongue, and incorporate easily with our native idiom." But a little reflection will shew us the vanity of this attempt. Since the age of Chaucer, at least, that is for more than 400 years, our language has been increased by continual transfusions from the French. To these have been added, from time to time, similar accessions from other languages, both ancient and modern.

Thus a copiousness and a flexibility, which in the instance of the Greek seem to have arisen out of that subtilty of intellect which gave birth to endless subdivision and distinction, have been in some measure compensated in our own by the influxes which it has received from the languages of many other people; and have been yet further improved by that liberty which it is to be hoped we shall always retain, each man, of speaking his thoughts after his own guise, without too much regard to any set mode or fashion.

He had before said, in this same preface, that "our knowledge of the northern literature is so scanty, that of words undoubtedly Teutonic the original is not always to be found in any ancient language; and I have therefore," he adds, "inserted Dutch or German substitutes, which I consider not as radical, but parallel; not as the parents, but sisters of the English." And in his history of the English language, speaking of our Saxon ancestors, to whom we must, I suppose, go for that Teutonic original which he so strongly recommends, he observes that, "their speech having been always cursory and extemporaneous, must have been artless and unconnected, without any modes of transition or involution of clauses, which abruptness and inconnection may be found even in their later writings." Of the additions which have been made to this our original

poverty, who shall say what ought to be rejected, and what retained? who shall say what deficiencies are real, and what imaginary? what the genius of our tongue may admit of, and what it must refuse? and in a word, what that native idiom is, a coalition with which is to be thus studiously consulted?

Throughout his Lives of the Poets, he constantly betrays a want of relish for the more abstracted graces of the art. When strong sense and reasoning were to be judged of, these he was able to appreciate justly. When the passions or characters were described, he could to a certain extent decide whether they were described truly or no. But as far as poetry has relation to the kindred arts of music and painting, to both of which he was confessedly insensible, it could not be expected that he should have much perception of its excellences. Of statuary, he said that its value was owing to its difficulty; and that a fellow will hack half a year at a block of marble to make something in stone that nearly resembles a man. What shall be thought of his assertion, that before the time of Dryden there was no poetical diction, no system of words at once refined from the grossness of domestic use, and free from the harshness of terms appropriated to particular arts, and "that words too familiar or too remote, defeat the purpose of a poet?" It might with more show of reason be affirmed, that in proportion as our writers have adopted such a

system as he speaks of, and have rejected words for no other cause than that they were either too familiar or too remote, we have been receding from the proper language of poetry. One of the chief ornaments, or more properly speaking, the constituents of poetical language, is the use of metaphors; and metaphors never find their way to the mind more readily, or affect it more powerfully, than when they are clothed in familiar words. Even a naked sentiment will lose none of its force from being conveyed in the most homely terms which our mother tongue can afford. They are the sounds which we have been used to from our infancy, which have been early connected with our hopes and fears, and still continue to meet us in our own homes and by our firesides, that will most certainly awaken those feelings with which the poet is chiefly concerned. As for the terms which Johnson calls remote, if I understand him rightly, they too may be employed occasionally, either when the attention is to be roused by something unusual, or for the sake of harmony; or it may be for no other reason than because the poet chooses thus to diversify his diction, so as to give a stronger relief to that which is familiar and common, by the juxtaposition of its contrary. Of this there can be no doubt, that, whoever lays down such arbitrary rules as Johnson has here prescribed, will find himself mocked at every turn by the power of genius, which meets with nothing in art or nature

that it cannot convert to its own use, and which delights to produce the greatest effects by means apparently the most inadequate.

He particularly valued himself on the Life of Cowley, for the sake of those observations which he had introduced into it on the metaphysical poets. Here he has mistaken the character of Marino, whom he supposes to be at the head of them. Marino abounds in puerile conceits; but they are not far-fetched, like those of Donne and Cowley; they generally lie on the surface, and often consist of nothing more than a mere play upon words; so that, if to be a punster is to be a metaphysician, Marino is a poetical Heraclitus. But Johnson had caught the cant of the age, in which it was usual to designate almost any thing absurd or extravagant by the name of metaphysical.

It is difficult to suppose that he had read some of the works on which he passes a summary sentence. The comedy of Love's Riddle, which he says, "adds little to the wonders of Cowley's minority," deserved to be commended at least for the style, which is a specimen of pure and unaffected English. Of Congreve's novel, he tells us, that he had rather praise it than read it. Judging from the letters of Congreve, his only writings in prose which it has been my good fortune to meet with, and which, as I remember, contain some admirable remarks on the distinction between wit and

humour, I should conclude that one part of his character as a writer has yet to make its way to the public notice. I have heard it observed by a lady, that Johnson, in his Life of Milton, is like a dog incensed and terrified at the presence of some superior creature, at whom he snarls, then runs away, and then returns to snarl again. If the comparison be a just one, it may be added, in extenuation of Johnson's malignity, that he is at least a dog who thinks himself to be attacking the inveterate foe of his master; for Milton's hostility to a kingly government was the crime which he could not forgive.

The mention of Milton, and of his politics, brings to my mind two sayings of Johnson's that were related to me by Mr. Price, of Lichfield. After passing an evening together at Mr. Seward's, the father of the poetess, where, in the course of conversation, the words "Me miserable!" in Paradise Lost, had been commended as highly pathetic, they had walked some way along the street in silence, which the good man was not likely first to break, when Johnson suddenly stopped, and turning round to him, exclaimed, "Sir! don't you think that 'Me miserable' is miserable stuff?" On another occasion he thus whimsically described the different manner in which he felt himself disposed towards a Whig and a Tory. "If," said he, "I saw a Whig and a Tory drowning, I would first save the Tory; and when I saw that he was safe, not

till then, I would go and help the Whig; but the dog should duck first; the dog should duck:" laughing with pleasure at the thoughts of the Whig's ducking.

The principal charm of the Lives of the Poets is in the store of information which they contain. He had been, as he says somewhere of his own father, "no careless observer of the passages of the times." In the course of a long life, he had heard, and read, and seen much; and this he communicates with such force and vivacity, and illustrates by observations so pertinent and striking, that we recur again and again to his pages as we would to so many portraits traced by the hand of a great master, in spite of our belief that the originals were often misrepresented, that some were flattered, and the defects of others still more overcharged. In his very errors as a critic there is often shewn more ability than in the right judgments of most other. When he is most wrong, he gives us some good reason for his being so. He is often mistaken, but never trivial and insipid. It is more safe to trust to him when he commends than when he dispraises; when he enlarges the boundaries of criticism which his predecessors had contracted, than when he sets up new fences of his own. The higher station we can take, the more those petty limits will disappear, which confine excellence to particular forms and systems. The critic who condemns that which

the generality of mankind, or even the few of those more refined in their taste, have long agreed in admiring, may naturally conclude the fault to be in himself; that there is in his mind or his organs some want of capacity for the reception of a certain species of pleasure. When Johnson rejected pastoral comedy, as being representative of *scenes* adapted chiefly "to please barbarians and children," he might have suspected that his own eye-sight, rather than pastoral comedy, was to blame. When he characterized blank verse, "as verse only to the eye," he might reasonably have questioned the powers of his own hearing. But this, and more than this, we may forgive him, for his successful vindication of Shakspeare from the faults objected to him by the French critics.

It is in his biographical works that Johnson is most pleasing and most instructive. His querulousness takes away much both from the agreeableness and the use of his moral writings. Addison has represented our nature in its most attractive forms; but Swift makes us turn with loathing from its deformities, and Johnson causes us to shudder at its misery.

Like most of the writers of that time, he made use of his poetry only as the means of introducing himself to the public. We cannot regret, as in the case of Goldsmith, that he put it to no further service. He took little delight in those appearances either of nature or art, for which the poet ought to have the

eye of a painter. Nor had he much more sense of the elegant in numbers and in sound. There were indeed certain rounds of metrical arrangement which he loved to repeat, but he could not go beyond them. How very limited his perceptions of this kind were, we may be convinced by reading his strictures on Dionysius the Halicarnassian in the Rambler, and the opinions on Milton's versification, which in the Idler he has put into the mouth of a minute critic, only to ridicule them, though they are indeed founded in truth. Johnson was not one of those whom Plato calls the φιλήκοοι καὶ φιλοθεάμονες, "who gladly acknowledge the beautiful wherever it is met with, in sounds, and colours, and figures, and all that is by art compounded from these;" much less had he ascended "to that abstract notion of beauty" which the same philosopher considers it so much more difficult to attain.*

In his tragedy, the dramatis personæ are like so many statues "stept from their pedestal to take the air." They come on the stage only to utter pompous sentiments of morality, turgid declamation, and frigid similes. Yet there is throughout, that strength of language, that heavy mace of words, with which, as with the flail of Talus, Johnson lays every thing prostrate before him. This style is better suited to

* Plato de Republicâ, 1. v. 476.

his imitations of the two satires of Juvenal. Of the first of these, "the London," Gray, in a letter to Horace Walpole, says that "to him it is one of those few imitations, that has all the ease and all the spirit of an original." The other is not at all inferior to it. Johnson was not insensible to such praise; and, could he have known how favourably Gray had spoken of him, would, I doubt not, have been more just to that poet, whom, besides the petulant criticism on him in his Life, he presumed in conversation to call "a heavy fellow."

In his shorter poems it appears as if nature could now and then thrust herself even into the bosom of Johnson himself, from whom we could scarcely have looked for such images as are to be found in the following stanzas.

By gloomy twilight half reveal'd,
With sighs we view the hoary hill,
The leafless wood, the naked field,
The snow-stopp'd cot, the frozen rill.

No music warbles through the grove,
No vivid colours paint the plain;
No more with devious steps I rove
Through verdant paths, now sought in vain.

Aloud the driving tempest roars,
Congeal'd impetuous showers descend;
Haste, close the window, bar the doors,
Fate leaves me Stella and a friend.

Sappho herself might have owned a touch of passionate tenderness, that he has introduced into another of these little pieces :.

——— The Queen of night
Round us pours a lambent light,
Light that seems but just to show
Breasts that beat, and cheeks that glow.

His Latin poetry is not without a certain barbaric splendour; but it discovers, as might be expected, no skill in the more refined graces of the Augustan age. The verse he quoted to Thomas Warton as his favourite, from the translation of Pope's Messiah,

Vallis aromaticas fundit Saronica nubes,

evinces that he could be pleased without elegance in a mode of composition, of which elegance is the chief recommendation. If we wished to impress foreiguers with a favourable opinion of the taste which our countrymen have formed for the most perfect productions of the Roman muse, we should send them, not to the pages of Johnson, but rather to those of Milton, Gray, Warton, and some of yet more recent date.

It was the chance of Johnson to fall upon an age that rated his great abilities at their full value. His laboriousness had the appearance of something

stupendous, when there were many literary but few very learned men. His vigour of intellect imposed upon the multitude an opinion of his wisdom, from the solemn air and oracular tone in which he uniformly addressed them. He would have been of less consequence in the days of Elizabeth or of Cromwell.

JOHN ARMSTRONG.

JOHN ARMSTRONG, the son of a Scotch minister, was born in the parish of Castleton, in Roxburghshire. The date of his birth has not been ascertained, nor is there any thing known concerning the earlier part of his education. The first we hear of it is, that he took a degree in medicine at Edinburgh, on the fourth of February, 1732; on which occasion he published his Thesis, as usual, and chose De Tabe Purulentâ for the subject of it. A copy of a Latin letter, which he sent to Sir Hans Sloane with this essay, is said to be in the British Museum. In an advertisement prefixed to some verses which he calls

Imitations of Shakspeare, he informs the reader that the first of them was just finished when Thomson's Winter made its appearance. This was in 1726, when he was, he himself says, very young. Thomson having heard of this production by a youth, who was of the same country with himself, desired to see it, and was so much pleased with the attempt, that he put it into the hands of Aaron Hill, Mallet, and Young. With Thomson, further than in the subject, there is no coincidence. The manner is a caricature of Shakspeare's.

In 1735, we find him in London, publishing a humorous pamphlet, entitled An Essay for abridging the Study of Physic, which, though he did not profess himself the writer, Mr. Nichols says,* he can, on the best authority, assert to be his. In two years after he published a Medical Essay. This was soon followed by a licentious poem, which I have not seen, and the title of which I do not think it necessary to record.—While thus employed, it was not to be expected that he should rise to much eminence in his profession. The dying man does not willingly see by his couch one who has recently disgraced himself by an open act of profligacy. In January 1741, he solicited Dr. Birch to use his influence with Mead in

* Nichols's Literary Anecdotes, Vol. ii. p. 307, &c.

recommending him to the appointment of Physician to the Forces which were then going to the West Indies. It does not appear that this application was successful; but in five years more, (February 1746,) he was nominated one of the Physicians to the Hospital for Invalid Soldiers behind Buckingham House; and in 1760, Physician to the Army in Germany. Meantime (in 1744) he had published his Art of Preserving Health, a didactic poem, that soon made its way to notice, and which, by the judiciousness of the precepts, might have tended to raise some opinion of his medical skill. At the beginning he addresses Mead: —

——— Beloved by all the graceful arts,
And long the favourite of the healing powers.

He had now become intimate with Thomson, to whose Castle of Indolence he contributed the three stanzas which conclude the first canto. One of the alterations made in them by Thomson is not for the better. He had written—

And here the gout, half tyger, half a snake,
Raged with a hundred teeth, a hundred stings;

which was changed to—

The sleepless gout here counts the crowing cocks,
A wolf now gnaws him, now a serpent stings.

When Thomson was seized with the illness of which he died, Armstrong was one of those who were sent for to attend him.

In 1751, he published Benevolence, an Epistle to Eumenes; and in 1753, Taste, an Epistle to a Young Critic. In the next year, he wrote the Forced Marriage, a tragedy, which Garrick did not think fitted for the stage. It was printed in 1770, with such of his other writings as he considered worthy of being collected. In this book, which he entitled Miscellanies, in two volumes, first appeared the second part of Sketches or Essays on Various Subjects, by Launcelot Temple, Esq.; the former had been published in 1758. Wilkes was supposed to have contributed something to these lively trifles, which, under an air of impertinent levity, are sometimes marked by originality and discernment. His poem called Day, an epistle which he had addressed to Wilkes in 1761, was not admitted by the author to take its place among the rest. For the dispute which gave rise to this omission he was afterwards sorry; and in his last illness declared, that what he had got in the army he owed to the kindness of Wilkes; and that although he had been rash and hasty, he still retained a due sense of gratitude. In attacking Wilkes, he contrived to exasperate Churchill also, who was not to be provoked with impunity, and who revenged

himself in the Journey. In 1771, he published a Short Ramble through some parts of France and Italy. In the neighbourhood of Leghorn he passed a fortnight with Smollett, to whom he was always tenderly attached. Of his book I regret the more that I cannot speak from my own knowledge, because the journey which it narrates is said to have been made in the society of Mr. Fuseli, with whom it is not easy to suppose that any one could have travelled without profiting by the elegance and learning of his companion. I have no better means of bringing my reader acquainted with some Medical Essays which he published in 1773; but from the manner in which they are spoken of in the Biographical Dictionary,* it is to be feared that they did not conduce to his reputation or advancement. He died in September, 1779, in consequence, as it is said, of a contusion which he received when he was getting into a carriage. His friends were surprised to find he had laid by three thousand pounds, which had been saved chiefly out of his half-pay.

Armstrong appears to have been good-natured and indolent, little versed in what is called the way of the world, and, with an eagerness of ostentation which looks like the result of mortified vanity, a despiser of

* Chalmers's Biographical Dictionary, vol. ii. p. 486.

the vulgar, whether found among the little or the great.

His Art of Preserving Health is the only production by which he is likely to be remembered. The theme which he has chosen is one, in which no man who lives long does not at some time or other feel an interest; and he has handled it with considerable skill. In the first Book, on Air, he has interwoven very pleasing descriptions both of particular places and of situations in general, with reference to the effects they may be supposed to have on health. The second, which treats of Diet, is necessarily less attractive, as the topic is less susceptible of ornament; yet in speaking of water, he has contrived to embellish it by some lines, which are, perhaps, the finest in the poem.

Now come, ye Naiads, to the fountains lead;
Now let me wander through your gelid reign.
I burn to view th' enthusiastic wilds
By mortals else untrod. I hear the din
Of waters thund'ring o'er the ruin'd cliffs.
With holy reverence I approach the rocks
Whence glide the streams renown'd in ancient song.
Here from the desart, down the rumbling steep,
First springs the Nile: here bursts the sounding Po
In angry waves: Euphrates hence devolves
A mighty flood to water half the East:
And there, in Gothic solitude reclin'd,

The cheerless Tanais pours his hoary urn.
What solemn twilight! What stupendous shades
Enwrap these infant floods! Through every nerve
A sacred horror thrills, a pleasing fear
Glides o'er my frame. The forest deepens round;
And more gigantic still th' impending trees
Stretch their extravagant arms athwart the gloom.
Are these the confines of another world?
A land of Genii? Say, beyond these wilds
What unknown regions? If indeed beyond
Aught habitable lies.

This has more majesty, and more to fill the imagination, than the corresponding paragraph in Thomson's Autumn.

Say then where lurk the vast eternal springs, &c.—771.

Yet it is inferior in beauty to some verses in a Latin poem by a writer who is now living.

Quippe sub immensis terræ penetralibus altæ
Hiscunt in vastum tenebræ: magnarum ibi princeps
Labitur undarum Oceanus, quo patre liquoris
Omnigeni latices et mollis lentor aquai
Profluxere, novâ nantes æstate superne
Aerii rores nebularum, et liquidus imber.
Fama est perpetuos illinc se erumpere fontes,
Florigerum Ladona, et lubrica vitra Selemni,
Crathidaque, imbriferamque Lycæis vallibus Hagno,
Et gelidam Panopin et Peirenen lacrymosam,
Illinc et rapido amnes fluere et mare magnum.

In the third book, he once more breathes freely, and in recounting the various kinds of exercise by which the human frame may be invigorated, his poetic faculty again finds room to play. Joseph Warton, in his Essay on Pope, has justly commended the Episode on the Sweating Sickness, with which it concludes. In the fourth and last, on the Passions, he seems to have grown weary of his task; for he has here less compression and less dignity.

His verse is much more compact than Thomson's, whom he resembles most in the turn of the expression; although he has aimed now and then, but with an ill-assured and timid hand, at a Miltonic boldness in the numbers or the phrase. When he takes occasion to speak of the river with which his remembrances in early life were associated, he has, contrary to his usual custom, indulged himself with enlarging on his prototype.

Thomson had mentioned incidentally the Tweed and the Jed:

——— The Tweed, pure parent stream,
Whose pastoral banks first heard my Doric reed,
With sylvan Jed! thy tributary brook.—*Autumn*, 889.

He has thus expanded it:—

——— Such the stream,
On whose Arcadian banks I first drew air,
Liddal; till now, except in Doric lays

Tun'd to her murmurs by her love-sick swains,
Unknown in song: though not a purer stream,
Through meads more flowery, or more romantic groves,
Rolls towards the western main. Hail, sacred flood!
May still thy hospitable swains be blest
In rural innocence; thy mountains still
Teem with the fleecy race; thy tuneful woods
For ever flourish; and thy vales look gay
With painted meadows, and the golden grain!
Oft with thy blooming sons, when life was new,
Sportive and petulant, and charm'd with toys,
In thy transparent eddies have I lav'd;
Oft trac'd with patient steps thy fairy banks,
With the well-imitated fly to hook
The eager trout, and with the slender line
And yielding rod, solicit to the shore
The struggling panting prey; while vernal clouds
And tepid gales obscur'd the ruffled pool,
And from the deeps call'd forth the wanton swarms.

B. iii. v. 96.

What he has here added of his love of fishing is from another passage in the Seasons.*

But his imitations of other writers, however frequent, have no semblance of study or labour. They seem to have been self-suggested, and to have glided tacitly and insensibly into the current of his thoughts,

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* Spring, v. 376, &c.

This is evinced by the little pains he took to work upon and heighten such resemblances. As he did not labour the details injudiciously, so he had a clear conception of his matter as a whole. The consequence is, that the poem has that unity and just subordination of parts which renders it easy to be comprehended at one view, and, on that account, more agreeable than the didactic poems of his contemporaries, which having detached passages of much more splendour, are yet wanting in those recommendations. One objection to his subject is, that it is least pleasing at that period of life when poetry is most so; for it is not till the glow of youth is gone by, and we begin to feel the infirmities and the coldness of age, that we are disposed to bestow much attention on the Art of Preserving Health.

His tragedy is worth but little. It appears from his Essays, that he had formed a contracted notion of nature, as an object of imitation for the tragic poet; and he has failed to give a faithful representation of nature, even according to his own imperfect theory.

The two short epistles on Benevolence and Taste, have ease and vigour enough to shew that he could, with a little practice, have written as well in the couplet measure as he did in blank verse. If Armstrong cannot be styled a man of genius, he is at least one of the most ingenious of our minor poets.

RICHARD JAGO.

RICHARD, the third son of Richard Jago, Rector of Beaudesert, in Warwickshire, was born on the 1st of October, 1715. His mother was Margaret, daughter of Wm. Parker, a gentleman of Henley in Arden, a neighbouring town in the same county. He received the earlier part of his education at Solihull, under Mr. Crumpton, whom Johnson, in his life of Shenstone, calls an eminent schoolmaster. Here Shenstone, who was scarcely one year older, and who, according to Johnson, distinguished himself by the quickness of his progress, imparted to Jago his love of letters. As the one, in his Schoolmistress, has delivered to posterity the old dame who taught him to read; the other has done the same for their common preceptor, but with less ability and less kindness, in his Edgehill, where he terms him "Pedagogue morose."

At the usual time he was admitted a servitor of University College, Oxford. His humble station in the University, though it did not break off his intimacy with Shenstone, must have hindered them from associating openly together.

In 1738, he took the degree of Master of Arts, having been first ordained to the curacy of Snitterfield, a village near the benefice of his father, who died two years after. Soon after that event, he married Dorothea Susannah, daughter of John Fancourt, Rector of Kimcote, in Leicestershire. In 1746, he was instituted to Harbury, where he resided; and about the same time was presented, by Lord Willoughby de Broke, to Chesterton, which lay at a short distance; both livings together amounting to about 100*l.* a year. In 1754, Lord Clare, afterwards Earl Nugent, obtained for him, from Dr. Madox, Bishop of Worcester, the vicarage of Snitterfield, worth about 140*l.* After having inserted some small poems in Dodsley's Collection, he published (in 1767) Edgehill, for which he obtained a large subscription; and in the following year, the fable of Labour and Genius. In 1771, his kind patron, Lord Willoughby de Broke, added to his other preferment the rectory of Kimcote, worth nearly 300*l.* in consequence of which he resigned Harbury.

His first wife died in 1751, leaving him seven children. He had known her from childhood. The attention paid her by Shenstone shews her to have been an amiable woman. In eight years after, he married Margaret, daughter of James Underwood, Esq. of Rugeley, in Staffordshire, who survived him. During the latter part of his life, his infirmities con-

fined him to the house. He died, after a short illness, on the 8th of May, 1781, and was buried in the church of Snitterfield. In his person he was above the middle stature. His manner was reserved before strangers, but easy even to sprightliness in the society of his friends. He is said to have discharged blamelessly all the duties of his profession and of domestic life. As a poet, he is not entitled to very high commendation. The distinguishing feature of his poetry is the ease of its diction. Johnson has observed, that if blank verse be not tumid and gorgeous, it is crippled prose. To disprove this, it would be sufficient to quote the greater part of that story from the Tatler* of the Young Man restored to Sight, which Jago has introduced into his Edge-hill. Nothing can be described more naturally, than his feelings and behaviour on his first recovery.

The friendly wound was given; th' obstructing film
Drawn artfully aside; and on his sight
Burst the full tide of day. Surprised he stood,
Not knowing where he was, nor what he saw.
The skilful artist first, as first in place,
He view'd, then seized his hand, then felt his own,
Then mark'd their near resemblance, much perplex'd,
And still the more perplex'd the more he saw.

* No. LV.

Now silence first th' impatient mother broke,
And, as her eager looks on him she bent,
"My son (she cried), my son!" On her he gazed
With fresh surprise. "And what!" he cried, "art thou
My mother? for thy voice bespeaks thee such,
Though to my sight unknown."—"Thy mother I
(She quick replied); thy sister, brother, these."—
"O! 'tis too much (he said); too soon to part,
Ere well we meet! But this new flood of day
O'erpowers me, and I feel a death-like damp
Chill all my frame, and stop my faltering tongue."
Now Lydia, so they call'd his gentle friend,
Who, with averted eye, but in her soul
Had felt the lancing steel, her aid applied,
"And stay, dear youth (she said), or with thee take
Thy Lydia, thine alike in life or death!"
At Lydia's name, at Lydia's well known voice,
He strove again to raise his drooping head
And ope his closing eye, but strove in vain,
And on her trembling bosom sunk away.
Now other fears distract his weeping friends:
But short their grief! for soon his life return'd,
And, with return of life, return'd their peace.—(B. iii.)

The country which he has undertaken to describe in this poem is fertile and tame. There was little left to him, except to enlarge on its antiquities, to speak of the habitations that were scattered over it, and to compliment the most distinguished among their possessors. Every day must detract something from the

interest, such as it is, that arises from these sources. A poet should take care not to make the fund of his reputation liable to be affected by dilapidations, or to be passed away by the hands of a conveyancer.

It would seem as if he had never visited a tract of land much wilder than that in which he was bred and born. In speaking of "embattled walls, raised on the mountain precipice," he particularises "Beaudesert; Old Montfort's seat;"*—a place, which, though it is pleasantly diversified with hill and dale, has no pretensions of so lofty a kind. This, he tells us, was "the haunt of his youthful steps;" and here he met with Somerville, the poet of the Chase, to whom both the subject and the title of his poem might have been suggested by that extensive common, known by the name of Cannock Chase,† on the border of which Beaudesert is situated.

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* Edge-Hill, Book I.

† The author has here fallen into an error in confounding Beaudesert, near Henley in Arden, with a place of the same name, near Cannock Chase. The mistake was pointed out to him a few days after its publication, by his valued friend and relative, the Rev. Thomas Price, Rector of Enville, Staffordshire. Mr. Price's letter will furnish the best explanation. He writes:—

"My dear Cary,

"In your life of Jago, I am afraid you have fallen into a mistake, by confounding the two Beaudeserts.

The digressions, with which he has endeavoured to enliven the monotony of his subject, are sometimes very far-fetched. He has scarcely finished his exordium, when he goes back to the third day of the creation, and then passes on to the deluge. This reminds one of the Mock Advocate in the Plaideurs of Racine, who, having to defend the cause of a dog that had robbed the pantry, begins,

Avant la naissance du monde——

on which the judge yawns and interrupts him,

That one of which Jago's father was Rector, and near which Somerville resided, is, as you have stated in the beginning of the life, near Henley, and to that the words, "Old Montfort's seat" must refer, because Dugdale, treating of Beldesert, near Henley, says, "on the east side of the last mentioned brook runneth a hilly tract, bordered with deep vallies on each part; the point whereof maketh a kind of promontory, whose ascent being somewhat steep, gave occasion of the fortifying there at first, considering its situation in these woodland parts, where, through the opportunity of so much shelter, advantage was most like to be taken by the disherited English and their offspring, to make head for their redemption from the Norman yoke. Tis not unlike, but this *mountainous* ground, &c. Thurslem de Montfort, near kinsman of the first Norman Earl of Warwick, erected that strong castle, whereunto, by reason of its pleasant situation, the French name Beldesert, was given, and which continued the chief seat of his descendants for divers ages.'"—Ed.

Avocat, ah! passons au déluge.

Of his shorter pieces, the three Elegies on Birds are well deserving of notice. That entitled the Blackbirds is so prettily imagined, and so neatly expressed, that it is worth a long poem. Thrice has Shenstone mentioned it in his Letters, in such a manner as to show how much it had pleased him. The Goldfinches is only less excellent. He has spoiled the Swallows by the seriousness of the moral.

Nunc non erat his locus.

The first half of Peytoe's Ghost has enough in it to raise a curiosity, which is disappointed by the remainder.

RICHARD OWEN CAMBRIDGE.

Richard Cambridge, the son of a Turkey merchant, descended from a family long settled in Gloucestershire, was born in London, on the fourteenth of February, 1717. His father dying soon after his birth, the care of his education devolved on his mother and his maternal uncle, Thomas Owen, Esq. a lawyer who had retired from practice to his seat in Bucking-

hamshire, and who, having no children of his own, adopted his nephew. At an early age he was sent to Eton, where, among his schoolfellows and associates, were Gray, West, Jacob Bryant, the Earl of Orford, and others eminent for wit or learning. Here he contracted not only a literary taste and habits of study, but that preference for the quiet amusements of a country life, which afterwards formed a part of his character. In 1734 he was removed from Eton to Oxford, and admitted a gentleman commoner of St. John's College. On the marriage of the Prince of Wales, two years after, he contributed some verses to the Congratulatory Poems from that University. A ludicrous picture, which he draws of academical festivity, betrays the future author of the Scribleriad:—

> In flowing robes and squared caps advance,
> Pallas their guide, her ever-favour'd band;
> As they approach they join in mystic dance,
> Large scrolls of paper waving in their hand;
> Nearer they come, I heard them sweetly sing.

He left the University without taking a degree, and in 1737 became a member of Lincoln's Inn. In four years after he married the second daughter of George Trenchard, Esq. of Woolverton, in Dorsetshire, who was Member of Parliament for Poole, and son of Sir John Trenchard, Secretary of State to King William. Retiring to his family mansion of

Whitminster, in Gloucestershire, on the banks of the Stroud, he employed himself in making that stream navigable to its junction with the Severn, in improving his buildings, and in ornamenting his grounds, which lay pleasantly in the rich vale of Berkeley. Here his happiness was interrupted by the death of one among his former playmates at Eton, whom he had most distinguished by his affection. This was Captain Berkeley, an officer, who in those happy times, when military men were not yet educated apart from scholars, had added to his other accomplishments a love of letters, and who fell in the battle of Fontenoy. This affliction discouraged him from proceeding in a poem on Society, which he had intended as a memorial of their friendship. The opening does not promise well enough to make us regret its discontinuance.

At Whitminster he had the honour of entertaining the Prince of Wales, with his consort, and their daughter the late Duchess Dowager of Brunswick, then on a visit to Lord Bathurst at Cirencester. The royal guests were feasted in a vessel of his own constructing, that was moored on a reach of the Severn; and the Prince gratified him by declaring, that he had often made similar attempts on the Thames, but never with equal success. To the exercise of mechanical ingenuity in improving the art of boat-building, he added uncommon skill in the use of the bow and arrow, and had assembled all the varieties of

those instruments that could be procured from different countries.

He appears to have possessed in an unusual degree, the power of suddenly ingratiating himself with those who conversed with him. A gentleman who had never before seen him, and who had reluctantly accompanied the Prince in his aquatic expedition, was so much pleased with Cambridge, as to be among the foremost to acknowledge his satisfaction; and having been introduced by William Whitehead, then tutor to the Earl of Jersey's eldest son, into the house of that nobleman, he soon became a welcome guest, and formed a lasting friendship with one of the family, who was afterwards Earl of Clarendon. In the number of his intimates he reckoned Bathurst, afterwards Chancellor, with whom an acquaintance, begun at Eton, had been continued at Lincoln's Inn; Carteret, Lyttelton, Grenville, Chesterfield, Yorke, Pitt, and Pulteney. In order to facilitate his intercourse with such associates, and perhaps in conformity with the advice of his departed friend Berkeley, who had recommended London as the proper stage for the display of his poetical talent, he was induced to pass two of his winters in the capital; but finding that the air of the town was injurious to his health, in 1751 he purchased a residence at Twickenham. He had now another opportunity of showing his taste for rural embellishment, in counteracting the effects of his pre-

decessor's formality, in opening his lawns and grouping his trees with an art that wore the appearance of negligence. An addition to his fortune by the decease of his uncle Mr. Owen, who left him his name together with his estate, enabled him to gratify these propensities. By some of his powerful friends he had been urged to obtain a seat in Parliament, and addict himself to a public life; but he valued his tranquillity too highly to comply with their solicitations. A sonnet addressed to him by his friend Edwards, author of the Canons of Criticism, and which is not without elegance, tended to confirm him in his resolve.

In the year* of his removal to Twickenham, the Scribleriad was published, a poem calculated to please the learned, rather than the vulgar, and with respect to which he had observed the rule of the *nonum prematur in annum*. To The World, the periodical paper undertaken soon after by Moore, and continued for four years, he contributed twenty-one numbers. Though determined against taking an active part in public affairs, yet he shewed himself to be far from indifferent to the interests of his country. Her maritime glory more peculiarly engaged his attention.

* In 1752 appeared his Dialogue between a Member and his Servant. The Intruder in 1754; and the Fakeer in 1756.—*MS. addition.* ED.

Anson, Boscawen, and indeed nearly all the distinguished seamen of his day, were among his intimates or acquaintance; and he assisted some of the principal navigators in drawing up the relations which they gave to the world of their discoveries. In 1761, he was prompted by his apprehensions, that the nation was not sufficiently on her guard against the endeavours making by the French to deprive her of her possessions in the East, to publish a History of the War upon the Coast of Coromandel. The great work undertaken by Mr. Orme prevented him from pursuing the subject.

Continuing thus to pass his days in the enjoyment of domestic happiness and learned ease, surrounded by a train of menials grown grey in his service, exercising the rites of hospitality with uniform cheerfulness, and performing the duties of religion with exemplarary punctuality, respected by the good and admired by the ingenious, he reached his eighty-third year with little inconvenience from the usual infirmities of age. His faculties then declining, he was dismissed by a gradual exhaustion of his natural powers, and resigning his breath without a sigh on the seventeenth of September, 1802—

——— Like ripe fruit he dropp'd
Into his mother's lap . . . . .
. . . . . for death mature.

Having always lived in an union of the utmost tenderness with his family, he exhibited a pleasing instance of the "ruling passion strong in death." "Having passed," says his son, "a considerable time in a sort of doze, from which it was thought he had hardly strength to revive, he awoke, and upon seeing me, feebly articulated, 'How do the dear people do?' When I answered that they were well; with a smile upon his countenance, and an increased energy of voice, he replied, 'I thank God;' and then reposed his head upon his pillow, and spoke no more."

He was buried at Twickenham, where, on inquiring a few years ago, I found that no monument had been raised to his memory.

He left behind a widow, a daughter, and two sons. From the narrative of his life written by one of these, the Reverend Archdeacon Cambridge, and prefixed to a handsome edition of his poems and his papers in The World, the above account has been chiefly extracted.

Chesterfield, another of the contributors to The World, inserted in it a short character of him under the name of Cantabrigiensis, introduced by an encomium on his temperance; for he was a water-drinker.

That he was what is commonly termed a news-monger, appears from the following laughable story,

told by the late Mr. George Hardinge, the Welch Judge :—

I wished upon some occasion to borrow a Martial. He told me he had no such book, *except by heart.* I therefore inferred, that he could not immediately detect me. Accordingly I sent him an epigram which I had made, and an English version of it, as from the original. He commended the latter, but said, that it wanted the neatness of the Roman. When I undeceived him, he laughed, and forgave me.

It originated in a whimsical fact. Mr. Cambridge had a rage for news; and living in effect at Richmond, though on the other side of the Thames, he had the command of many political reporters. As I was then in professional business at my chambers, I knew less of public news than he did; and every Saturday, in my way from Lincoln's Inn to a villa of my own near him, called upon him for the news from London. This I told him was not unlike what Martial said, L. iii. 7.

Deciano salutem.

Vix Româ egressus, villa novus advena, ruris
Vicini dominum te " quid in urbe ?" rogo.
Tu novitatis amans Româ si Tibura malles
Per nos " de villâ quæ nova" disce " tuâ."

Nichols's Illust. of the Literary Hist. of the xviii. *Cent.* v. i. p. 131.

Of his poems, which are neither numerous, nor exhibit much variety of manner, little remains to be

said. Archimage, though a sprightly sally, cannot be ranked among the successful imitations of Spenser's style. *Als ne* and *mote*, how often soever repeated, do not go far towards a resemblance of the Faery Queene.

In his preface to the Scribleriad, which betrays great solicitude to explain and vindicate the plan of the poem, he declares that his intention is "to shew the vanity and uselessness of many studies, reduce them to a less formidable appearance, and invite our youth to application, by letting them see that a less degree of it than they apprehend, judiciously directed, and a very few books indeed, well recommended, will give them all the real information which they are to expect from human science." The design was a laudable one. In the poem itself we feel the want of some principal event, on the development and issue of which the interest of the whole may turn; as in those patterns of the mock-heroic, the Secchia Rapita, the Lutrin, and the Rape of the Lock; an advantage, which these poems in some measure derive from having been founded in fact; for however trifling the incident by which the imagination of the poet may have been first excited, when once known or believed to be true, it communicates something of its own reality to all the fictions that grow out of it. The hero too is one of the ἀμενηνὰ κάρηνα; or rather is but the shadow of a shade; for he has taken

the character of Martinus Scriblerus, as he found it in the memoirs of that unsubstantial personage. The adventures indeed in which the author has engaged him, though they did not require much power of invention, are yet sufficiently ludicrous; and we join, perhaps, more willingly in the laugh, as it is aimed at general folly and not at individual weakness. The wit is not condensed and sparkling as in the Dunciad; the writer's chief resource consisting in an adaptation of passages from writers, ancient and modern, to the purposes of a grave burlesque; and for the application of these, by a contrivance not very artificial, it is sometimes necessary to recur to the notes. The style, if it be not distinguished by any remarkable strength or elegance, is at least free and unaffected.

The imitations of Horace are often happy: that addressed to Lord Bathurst, particularly towards the latter part, is perhaps the best. Of the original jeux d'esprits, the verses occasioned by the Marriage and Game Acts, both passed the same session, have, I think, most merit. The Fable of Jotham, or the Borough Hunters, does not make up by ingenuity for what it wants in reverence. In the Fakeer, a tale professedly borrowed from Voltaire, the story takes a less humorous turn than as it is told in the extracts frome Pere Le Comte's memoirs in the preface.

TOBIAS SMOLLETT.

TOBIAS SMOLLETT was born in the parish of Cardross, in Dumbartonshire, in the year 1721. His father, Archibald, a Scotch gentleman of small fortune, was the youngest son of Sir James Smollett, who was knighted on King William's accession, represented the borough of Dumbarton in the last Scotch Parliament, and was of weight enough to be chosen one of the commissioners for framing the treaty of union between the two countries. On his return from Leyden, where it was then the custom for young Scotchmen to complete their education, Archibald married Barbara, the daughter of Mr. Cunningham, of Gilbertfield, near Glasgow; and died soon after the birth of our poet, leaving him, with another son and a daughter, dependent on the bounty of their grandfather. The place of Smollett's nativity was endeared to him by its natural beauties; insomuch that, when he had an opportunity of comparing it with foreign countries, he preferred the neighbouring lake of Loch Lomond to those most celebrated in Switzerland and Italy. Being placed at the school of Dumbarton, which was conducted by John Love,

a man of some distinction as a scholar, he is said to have exercised his poetical talents in writing satires on the other boys, and in panegyrising his heroic countryman Wallace. From hence, at the usual age, he was removed to Glasgow; and there making choice of the study of medicine, was apprenticed to Mr. John Gordon, a chirurgeon, who afterwards took out a diploma, and practised as a physician. His irresistible propensity to burlesque did not suffer the peculiarities of this man, whom he has represented under the character of Potion, in Roderick Random, to escape him. He made some amends for the indignity, by introducing honourable mention of the name of Dr. Gordon in the last of his novels. A more overt act of contumacy to his superiors, into which his vivacity hurried him, trifling as it may appear, is so characteristic, that I cannot leave it untold. A lad, who was apprenticed to a neighbouring chirurgeon, and with whom he had been engaged in frolic on a winter's evening, was receiving a severe reprimand from his master for quitting the shop; and having alleged in his excuse, that he had been hit by a snow-ball, and had gone out in pursuit of the person who had thrown it, was listening to the taunts of his master, on the improbability of such a story. "How long," said the son of Æsculapius, with the confident air of one fearless of contradiction, "might I stand here, and such a thing not happen to me?" when

Smollett, who stood behind the pillar of the shop-door, and heard what passed, snatching up a snow-ball, quickly delivered his playmate from the dilemma in which this question had placed him, by an answer equally prompt and conclusive. Not content with this attack, he afterwards made the offender sit for his whole-length portrait, in the person, as it is supposed, of Crab, in the same novel.

In the midst of these childish sallies, he meditated greater things; and the sound of the pestle and mortar did not prevent him from attending to the inspirations of Melpomene. At the age of eighteen he had composed a tragedy on the murder of James I. the Scottish monarch, and about that time losing his grandfather, by whom he had been supported, and discovering that he must thenceforth rely on his own exertions for a maintenance, he set forth with his juvenile production for London. On his arrival there, failing as might be expected, to persuade the managers to bring his tragedy on the stage, he solicited and obtained the place of a chirurgeon's mate, on board the fleet destined for the attack of Carthagena. Of this ill-conducted and unfortunate expedition, he not only made a sketch in his Roderick Random, but afterwards inserted a more detailed account of it in the Compendium of Voyages. After a short time, he was so little pleased with his employment, that he determined to relinquish it, and

remain in the West Indies. During his residence in Jamaica, he met with Miss Anne Lascelles, to whom, after a few years, he was married, and with whom he expected to receive a fortune of three thousand pounds. In the islands he probably depended for a subsistence on the exercise of his skill as a chirurgeon. He returned to London in the year 1746; and though his family had distinguished themselves by their revolutionary principles, testified his sympathy with the late sufferings of his countrymen, in their expiring struggle for the house of Stuart, by some lines, entitled the Tears of Scotland. When warned of his indiscretion, he added that concluding stanza of reproof to his timid counsellors :—

> While the warm blood bedews my veins,
> And unimpair'd remembrance reigns,
> Resentment of my country's fate
> Within my filial breast shall beat;
> And spite of her insulting foe,
> My sympathizing verse shall flow:
> Mourn, hapless Caledonia, mourn
> Thy banish'd peace, thy laurels torn!

His first separate publication was, Advice, a satire, in the autumn of this year. At the beginning of the next it was followed by a second part, called Reproof, in which he took an occasion of venting his resentment against Rich, the manager of Covent Garden, with whom he had quarrelled concerning an opera,

written by him for that theatre, on the story of Alcestis. In consequence of their dispute the piece was not acted; nor did he take the poet's usual revenge by printing it.

The fallacious prospects of his wife's possessions now encouraged him to settle himself in a better house, and to live with more hospitality than his circumstances would allow him to maintain. These difficulties were in some measure obviated by the sale of a new translation which he made of Gil Blas, and still more by the success of Roderick Random, which appeared in 1748. In none of his succeeding novels has he equalled the liveliness, force, and nature of this his first essay. So just a picture of a seafaring life especially had never before met the public eye. Many of our naval heroes may probably trace the preference which has decided them in their choice of a profession to an early acquaintance with the pages of Roderick Random. He has not, indeed, decorated his scenes with any seductive colours; yet such is the charm of a highly wrought description, that it often induces us to overlook what is disgusting in the objects themselves, and transfer the pleasure arising from the mere imitation to the reality.

Strap was a man named Lewis, a book-binder, who came from Scotland with Smollett, and who usually dined with him at Chelsea on Sundays. In this

book he also found a niche for the exhibition of his own distresses in the character of Melopoyn the dramatic poet. His applications to the directors of the theatre, indeed, continued so unavailing, that he at length resolved to publish his unfortunate tragedy by subscription; and in 1749 the Regicide appeared with a preface, in which he complained grievously of their neglect, and of the faithlessness of his patrons, among whom Lord Lyttelton particularly excited his indignation. In the summer of this year his view of men and manners was extended by a journey to Paris. Here he met with an acquaintance and countryman in Doctor Moore, the author of Zeluco, who a few years after him had been also an apprentice to Gordon, at Glasgow. In his company Smollett visited the principal objects of curiosity in the neighbourhood of the French metropolis.

The canvas was soon stretched for a display of fresh follies: and the result was, his Adventures of Peregrine Pickle, in 1751. The success he had attained in exhibiting the characters of seamen led him to a repetition of similar delineations. But though drawn in the same broad style of humour, and, if possible, discriminated by a yet stronger hand, the actors do not excite so keen an interest on shore as in their proper element. The Memoirs of a Lady of Quality, the substance of which was communicated by the woman herself, whose story they

relate, quickened the curiosity of his readers at the time, and a considerable sum which he received for the insertion of them augmented the profits which he derived from a large impression of the work. But they form a very disagreeable interruption in the main business of the narrative. The pedantic physician was intended for a representation of Akenside, who had probably too much dignity to notice the affront, for which some reparation was made by a compliment to his talents for didactic poetry, in our author's History of England.

On his return (in 1749) he took his degree of Doctor in Medicine, and settled himself at Chelsea,* where he resided till 1763. The next effort of his pen, an Essay on the External Use of Water, in a letter to Dr. ——, with particular remarks upon the present method of using the mineral waters at Bath, in Somersetshire, &c. (in 1752) was directed to views of professional advancement. In his profession, however, he did not succeed; and meeting with no encouragement in any other quarter, he devoted himself henceforward to the service of the booksellers. More novels, translation, historical compilation, ephemeral criticism, were the multifarious employments which they laid on him. Nothing that he afterwards produced quite came up to the raciness of his first

* He first settled at Bath.—*MS. addition.* Ed.

performances. In 1753, he published the Adventures of Ferdinand Count Fathom. In the dedication of this novel he left a blank after the word Doctor, which may probably be supplied with the name of Armstrong. From certain phrases that occur in the more serious parts, I should conjecture them to be hastily translated from another language. Some of these shall be laid before the reader, that he may judge for himself. "A solemn profession, on which she *reposed herself* with the most implicit confidence and faith;" ch. xii. (v. 4. p. 54, of Dr. Anderson's edition.)—"Our hero would have made his retreat through the *port*, by which he had entered;" instead of the *door*; ch. xiii. p. 55.—"His own penetration pointed out the *canal*, through which his misfortune had flowed upon him;" instead of the *channel*; ch. xx. p. 94.—"Public ordinaries, walks, and *spectacles*;" instead of *places of entertainment*;" ch. xxv. p. 125.—"The Tyrolese, by the *canal* of Ferdinand's finger, and recommendation, sold a pebble for a real brilliant;" ch. xxxvii. p. 204.—"A young gentleman whose pride was *indomitable*;" ch. xlvi. p. 242. In one chapter we find ourselves in a stage-coach, with such a company as Smollett loved to introduce to his readers.

He was about this time prosecuted in the King's Bench, on a charge of having intended to assassinate one of his countrymen, whose name was Peter Gor-

don. A few blows of the cane, which, after being provoked by repeated insolence, he had laid across the shoulders of this man, appeared to be the sole grounds for the accusation, and he was, therefore, honourably acquitted by the jury. A letter, addressed to the prosecutor's counsel, who, in Smollett's opinion, by the intemperance of his invective had abused the freedom of speech allowed on such occasions, remains to attest the irritability and vehemence of his own temper. The letter was either not sent, or the lawyer had too much moderation to make it the subject of another action, the consequences of which he could have ill borne; for the expense, incurred by the former suit, was already more than he was able to defray, at a time when pecuniary losses and disappointments in other quarters were pressing heavily upon him. A person, for whom he had given security in the sum of one hundred and eighty pounds, had become a bankrupt, and one remittance which he looked for from the East Indies, and another of more than a thousand pounds from Jamaica, failed him. From the extremity to which these accidents reduced him, he was extricated by the kindness of his friend, Doctor Macaulay, to which he had been before indebted; and by the liberality of Provost Drummond, who paid him a hundred pounds for revising the manuscript of his brother Alexander Drummond's travels through Germany, Italy, Greece,

&c. which were printed in a folio volume in 1754. He had long anticipated the profits of his next work. This was a translation of Don Quixote, published at the beginning of 1755. Lord Woodhouselee, in his Essay on Translation, has observed, that it is little else than an improvement of the version by Jarvis. On comparing a few passages with the original, I perceive that he fails alike in representing the dignity of Cervantes in the mock-heroic, and the familiarity of his lighter manner. These are faults that might have been easily avoided by many a writer of much less natural abilities than Smollett, who wanted both the leisure and the command of style that were requisite for such an undertaking. The time, however, which he gave to that great master, was not thrown away. He must have come back from the study with his mind refreshed, and its powers invigorated by contemplating so nearly the most skilful delineation that had ever been made of human nature, according to that view in which it most suited his own genius to look at it.

On his return from a visit to Scotland, where a pleasant story is told of his being introduced to his mother as a stranger, and of her discovery of him after some time, with a burst of maternal affection, in consequence of his smiling, he engaged (1756) in an occupation that was not likely to make him a wiser, and certainly did not make him a happier man. The

celebrity obtained by the Monthly Review had raised up a rival publication, under the name of the Critical. The share which Smollett had in the latter is left in some uncertainty. Doctor Anderson tells us, that he undertook the chief direction; and Mr. Nichols,* that he assisted Archibald Hamilton the printer. Whatever his part might be, the performance of it was enough to waste his strength with ignoble labour, to embitter his temper by useless altercation, and to draw on him contempt and insult from those who, however they surpassed him in learning, could scarcely be regarded as his superiors in native vigour and fertility of mind. "Sure I," said Gray, in a letter to Mason, "am something a better judge than all the man-midwives and presbyterian parsons that ever were born. Pray give me leave to ask you, do you find yourself tickled with the commendations of such people? (for you have your share of these too) I dare say not; your vanity has certainly a better taste. And can then the censure of such critics move you?" And Warburton, who had probably been exasperated in the same way, called his History of England the nonsense of a vagabond Scot.

In the same year was published a Compendium of Authentic and Entertaining Voyages, in seven volumes,

* Literary Anecdotes, vol. iii. p. 398.

which was said to have been made under his superintendence. We have his own word,* that he had written a very small part of it. In 1757, his Reprisal, or the Tars of Old England, an entertainment in two acts, in which the scene throughout is laid on board ship, and which describes seamen in his usual happy vein, was acted at Drury-lane with tolerable success. In 1758, he published his History of England from the Invasion of Julius Cæsar to the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1748, four volumes. Of this work, hasty as it was, having been compiled in fourteen months, ten thousand copies were speedily sold.

Some strictures in the Critical Review, which, in order to screen the printer of it, he generously avowed himself to have written, once more exposed him to a legal prosecution. The offensive passages were occasioned by a pamphlet, in which Admiral Knowles had vindicated himself from some reflections that were incidentally cast on him in the course of Sir John Mordaunt's trial for the failure of a secret expedition on the coast of France, near Rochefort. In his comments on the pamphlet, Smollett had stigmatized Knowles, the author of it, as "an admiral without conduct, an engineer without knowledge,

* In a Letter in Dr. Anderson's Edition of his Works, vol. i. p. 179.

an officer without resolution, and a man without veracity." It can scarcely be wondered, if, after such provocation, the party injured was not deterred by menaces, or diverted by proposals of agreement, from seeking such reparation as the law would afford him. This reparation the law did not fail to give; and Smollett was sentenced to pay a penalty of one hundred pounds, and to be confined for three months in the prison of the King's Bench. Cervantes wrote his Don Quixote in a gaol; and Smollett resolved, since he was now in one, that he would write a Don Quixote too. It may be said of the Spaniard, according to Falstaff's boast, "that he is not only witty in himself, but the cause that wit is in other men;" and among the many attempts at imitation, to which the admirable original has given rise, Sir Launcelot Greaves is not one of the worst. That a young man, whose brain had been slightly affected by a disappointment in love, should turn knight-errant, at a time when books of chivalry were no longer in vogue, is not, indeed, in the first instance, very probable. But we are contented to overlook this defect in favour of the many original touches of character, and striking views of life, particularly in the mad-house, and the prison into which he leads his hero, and which he has depicted with the force of Hogarth. If my recollection does not mislead me, he will be found in some

parts of this novel to have had before him the Pharsamond of Marivaux, another copy of Cervantes. But it does not anywhere like Count Fathom, betray symptoms of being a mere translation. Sir Launcelot Greaves was first printed piecemeal in the British Magazine, or Monthly Repository, a miscellany to which Goldsmith was also a contributor. It has the recommendation of being much less gross and indelicate than any other of his novels.

During the same period, 1761 and 1762, he published, in numbers, four volumes of a Continuation of his History of England; and in 1765, a fifth, which brought it down to that time.

Not contented with occupation under which an ordinary man would have sunk, he undertook, on the 29th of May, 1762, to publish the Briton, a weekly paper, in defence of the Earl of Bute, on that day appointed first commissioner of the treasury; and continued it till the 12th of February in the ensuing year, about two months before the retirement of that nobleman from office. By his patron he complained that he was not properly supported; and he incurred the hostility of Wilkes, who had before been his staunch friend, but who espoused the party in opposition to the Minister, by an attack, the malignance of which no provocation could have justified.

In 1763, his name was prefixed, in conjunction

with that of Francklin, the Greek professor at Cambridge, and translator of Sophocles and Lucian, to a version of the works of Voltaire, in twenty-seven volumes. To this he contributed, according to his own account, a small part, including all the notes historical and critical. To the Modern Universal History, which was published about the same time, he also acknowledged himself to be a contributor, though of no very large portion.

His life had hitherto been subjected to the toil and anxiety of one doomed to earn a precarious subsistence by his pen. Though designed by nature for the light and pleasant task of painting the humours and follies of men, he had been compelled to undergo the work of a literary drudge. Thongh formed to enjoy the endearments of friendship, his criticisms had made those who were before indifferent to him his enemies; and his politics, those whom he had loved, the objects of his hatred. The smile, which the presence of his mother for a moment recalled, had almost deserted his features. Still we may suppose it to have lightened them up occasionally, in those hours of leisure when he was allowed to unbend himself in the society of a wife, with whom he seems always to have lived happily, and of an only daughter, who was growing up to share with her his caresses, and to whom both looked as the future support of their age.

Ταύτῃ, γέγηθα, κἀπιλήθομαι κακῶν·
Ἥδ' ἀντὶ πολλῶν ἐστί μοι παραψυχή,
Πόλις, τιθήνη, βάκτρον, ἡγεμὼν ὁδοῦ

In her, rejoicing, I forgot mine ills.
I have lost much; but she remains, my comfort,
My city and my nurse, my staff and guide.

He had bemoaned his distresses as an author; but was now to feel calamity of a different kind. This only daughter was taken from him by death, in her fifteenth year. Henceforward he was, with some short intervals, a prey to querulousness and disease. Soon after this loss (in June, 1763,) being resolved to try what change of climate would do for him, he set out with his disconsolate partner on a journey through France and Italy. On quitting his own country, he describes himself "traduced by malice, persecuted by faction, abandoned by false patrons, and overwhelmed by the sense of a private calamity, which it was not in the power of fortune to repair." The account which he published of this expedition on his return, shews that he did not derive from it the relief which he had expected. The spleen with which he contemplated every object that presented itself to him, was ridiculed by Sterne, who gave him the name of Smelfungus. With this abatement, the narration has much to interest and amuse, and conveys some information by which a traveller might

perhaps still profit. When he brings before us the driver pointing to the gibbeted criminal whom he had himself betrayed, and unconsciously discovering his own infamy to Smollett, we might suppose ourselves to be reading a highly wrought incident in one of his own fictions. His prognostics of the approaching Revolution in France are so remarkable, that I am tempted to transcribe them. "The King of France, in order to give strength and stability to his administration, ought to have sense to adopt a sage plan of economy, and vigour of mind sufficient to execute it in all its parts with the most rigorous exactness. He ought to have courage enough to find fault, and even to punish the delinquents, of what quality soever they may be; and the first act of reformation ought to be a total abolition of all the farms. There are undoubtedly many marks of relaxation in the reins of the French government; and in all probability, the subjects of France will be the first to take the advantage of it. There is at present a violent fermentation of different principles among them, which under the reign of a very weak prince, or during a long minority, may produce a great change in the constitution. In proportion to the progress of reason and philosophy, which have made great advances in this kingfrom, superstition loses ground; ancient prejudices give way; a spirit of freedom takes the ascendant. All the learned laity of France, detest the hierarchy

as a plan of despotism, founded on imposture and usurpation. The protestants, who are very numerous in the southern parts, abhor it with all the rancour of religious fanaticism. Many of the Commons, enriched by commerce and manufacture, grow impatient of those odious distinctions, which exclude them from the honours and privileges due to their importance in the commonwealth; and all the parliaments or tribunals of justice in the kingdom seem bent upon asserting their rights and independence in the face of the king's prerogative, and even at the expense of his power and authority. Should any prince, therefore, be seduced, by evil counsellors, or misled by his own bigotry, to take some arbitrary step that may be extremely disagreable to all those communities, without having spirit to exert the violence of his power for the support of his measures, he will become equally detested and despised, and the influence of the Commons will insensibly encroach upon the pretensions of the crown." (Travels through France and Italy, c. xxxvi. Smollett's Works, vol. v. p. 536.) This presentiment deserves to be classed with that prophecy of Harrington in his Oceana, of which some were fond enough to hope the speedy fulfilment at the beginning of the revolution. Smollett passed the greater part of his time abroad at Nice, but proceeded also to Rome and Florence.

About a year after he had returned from the con-

tinent (in June, 1766,) he again visited his native country, where he had the satisfaction to find his mother and sister still living. At Edinburgh he met with the two Humes, Robertson, Adam Smith, Blair, and Ferguson; but the bodily ailments, under which he was labouring, left him little power of enjoying the society of men who had newly raised their country to so much eminence in literature. To his friend, Dr. Moore, then a chirurgeon at Glasgow, who accompanied him from that place, to the banks of Loch Lomond, he wrote, in the February following, that his expedition into Scotland had been productive of nothing but misery and disgust, adding, that he was convinced his brain had been in some measure affected; for that he had had a kind of *coma vigil* upon him from April to November, without intermission. He was at this time at Bath, where two chirurgeons, whom he calls the most eminent in England, and whose names were Middleton and Sharp, had so far relieved him from some of the most painful symptoms of his malady, particularly an inveterate ulcer in the arm, that he pronounced himself to be better in health and spirits than during any part of the seven preceding years. But the flattering appearance which his disorder assumed was not of long continuance. A letter written to him by David Hume, on the 18th of July following, shews that either the state of his health, or the narrowness

of his means, or perhaps both these causes together, made him desirous of obtaining the consulship of Nice or Leghorn. But neither the solicitations of Hume, nor those of the Duchess of Hamilton, could prevail on the Minister, Lord Shelburne, to confer on him either of these appointments. In the next year, September 21, 1768, the following paragraph in a letter from Hume convinced him that he had nothing to expect from any consideration for his necessities in that quarter. "What is this you tell me of your perpetual exile and of your never returning to this country? I hope that, as this idea arose from the bad state of your health, it will vanish on your recovery, which, from your past experience, you may expect from those happier climates to which you are retiring; after which, the desire of revisiting your native country will probably return upon you, unless the superior cheapness of foreign countries prove an obstacle, and detain you there. I could wish that means had been fallen on to remove this objection, and that at least it might be equal to you to live anywhere, except when the consideration of your health gave the preference to one climate above another. But the indifference of ministers towards literature, which has been long, and indeed almost always is the case in England, gives little prospect of any alteration in this particular."

If ministers would in no other way conduce to his

support, he was determined to levy on them at least an involuntary contribution, and accordingly (in 1769,) he published the Adventures of an Atom, in which he laid about him to right and left, and with a random humour, somewhat resembling that of Rabelais and Swift, made those whom he had defended and those whom he had attacked, alike the subject of very gross merriment.

But his sport and his suffering were now coming to a close. The increased debility under which he felt himself sinking, induced him again to try the influence of a more genial sky. Early in 1770, he set out with his wife for Italy; and after staying a short time at Leghorn, settled himself at Monte Nero, near that port. In a letter to Caleb Whitefoord, dated the 18th of May, he describes himself rusticated on the side of a mountain that overlooks the sea, a most romantic and salutary situation. One other flash broke from him in this retirement. His novel, called the Expedition of Humphry Clinker, which he sent to England to be printed in 1770, though abounding in portraitures of exquisite drollery, and in situations highly comical, has not the full zest and flavour of his earlier works. The story does not move on with the same impetuosity. The characters have more the appearance of being broad caricatures from real life, than the creatures of a rich and teeming invention. They seem rather the repre-

sentation of individuals grotesquely designed and extravagantly coloured, than of classes of men.

His bodily strength now giving way by degrees, while that of his mind remained unimpaired, he expired at his residence near Leghorn, on the 21st of October, 1771, in the 51st year of his age.

His mother died a little before him. His widow lived twelve years longer, which she passed at Leghorn in a state of unhappy dependence on the bounty of the merchants at that place, and of a few friends in England. Out of her slender means she contrived to erect a monument to her deceased husband, on which the following inscription from the pen of his friend Armstrong was inscribed:

Hic ossa conduntur
TOBIÆ SMOLLETT, Scoti;
Qui prosapiâ generosâ et antiquâ natus,
Priscæ virtutis exemplar emicuit;
Aspectu ingenuo,
Corpore valido,
Pectore animoso,
Indole apprime benignâ,
Et fere supra facultates munificâ
Insignis.
Ingenio feraci, faceto, versatili,
Omnigenæ fere doctrinæ mire capaci,
Variâ fabularum dulcedine
Vitam moresque hominum,
Ubertate summâ ludens depinxit.

Adverso, interim, nefas! tali tantoque alumno,
Nisi quo satyræ opipare supplebat,
Seculo impio, ignavo, fatuo,
Quo Musæ vix nisi nothæ
Mærenatulis Britannicis
Fovebantur.
In memoriam
Optimi et amabilis omnino viri,
Permultis amicis desiderati,
Hocce marmor,
Dilectissima simul et amantissima conjunx
L. M.
Sacravit.

A column with a Latin inscription was also placed to commemorate him on the banks of his favourite Leven, near the house in which he was born, by his kinsman Mr. Smollett of Bonhill.

The person of Smollett is described by his friend Dr. Moore as stout and well-proportioned, his countenance engaging, and his manner reserved, with a certain air of dignity that seemed to indicate a consciousness of his own powers.

In his disposition, he appears to have been careless, improvident, and sanguine; easily swayed both in his commendation and censures of others, by the reigning humour of the moment, yet warm, and (when not influenced by the baneful spirit of faction) steady in his attachments. On his independence he particularly prided himself. But that this was

sometimes in danger from slight causes is apparent, from an anecdote related by Dr. Wooll, in his Life of Joseph Warton. When Huggins* had finished his translation of Ariosto, he sent a fat buck to Smollett, who at that time managed the Critical Review; consequently the work was highly applauded; but the history of the venison becoming public, Smollett was much abused, and in a future number of the Review retracted his applause. Perpetual employment of his pen left him little time for reflection or study. Hence, though he acquired a greater readiness in the use of words, his judgment was not proportionably improved; nor did his manhood bear fruits that fully answered to the vigorous promise of his youth. Yet it may be questioned whether any other writer of English prose had before his time produced so great a number of works of invention. When, in addition to his novels, we consider his various productions, his histories, his travels, his two dramatic pieces, his poems, his

* From a letter of Granger's (the author of the Biographical History of England,) to Dr. Ducarel (see Nichols's Illustrations of the Literary History of the Eighteenth Century, vol. iii. p. 601,) it appears that Huggins made also a translation of Dante, which was never printed. He was son of that cruel keeper of the Fleet prison who was punished for the ill treatment of his prisoners.—(Ibid.)

translations, his critical labours, and other occasional publications, we are surprised that so much should have been done in a life of no longer continuance.

Excepting Congreve, I do not remember that any of the poets, whose lives have been written by Johnson, is said to have produced anything in the shape of a novel. Of the Incognita of Congreve, that biographer observes, not very satisfactorily, that he would rather praise it than read it. In the present series, Goldsmith, Smollett, and Johnson himself, if his Rasselas entitle him to rank in the number, are among the most distinguished in this species of writing, of whom modern Europe can boast. To these, if there be added the names of De Foe, Richardson, Fielding, and Sterne, not to mention living authors, we may produce such a phalanx as scarcely any other nation can equal. Indeed no other could afford a writer so wide a field for the exercise of this talent as ours, where the fullest scope and encouragement are given to the human mind to expand itself in every direction, and assume every shape and hue, by the freedom of the government, and by the complexity of civil and commercial interests. No one has portrayed the whimsical varieties of character, particularly in lower life, with a happier vein of burlesque than Smollett. He delights, indeed, chiefly by his strong delineation of ludicrous incidents and grotesque manners derived

from this source. He does not hold our curiosity entangled by the involution of his story, nor suspend it by any artful protraction of the main event. He turns aside for no digression that may serve to display his own ingenuity or learning. From the beginning to the end, one adventure commonly rises up and follows upon another, like so many waves of the sea, which cease only because they have reached the shore.

> The billows float in order to the shore,
> The wave behind rolls on the wave before.

Admirable as the art of the novelist is, we ought not to confound it with that of the poet; nor to conclude, because the characters of Parson Adams, Colonel Bath, and Squire Western in Fielding; and of Strap, Morgan, and Pipes, in Smollett, impress themselves as strongly on the memory, and seem to be as really individuals whom we have seen and conversed with, as many of those which are the most decidedly marked in Shakspeare himself; that therefore the powers requisite for producing such descriptions are as rare and extraordinary in one instance as in the other. For the poet has this peculiar to himself; that he communicates something from his own mind, which, at the same time that it does not prevent his personages from being kept equally distinct from one another, raises them all above the level of our common nature. Shakspeare, whom we

appear not only to know, personally, but to admire and love as one superior to the cast of his kind,—

Sweetest Shakspeare, fancy's child,

has left some trick of his own lineaments and features discoverable in the whole brood.

Igneus est ollis vigor et cœlestis origo
Seminibus.

It is this which makes us willing to have our remembrance of his characters refreshed by constant repetition, which gives us such a pleasure in summoning them before us, as "age cannot wither, nor custom stale." This is a quality which we do not find in Fielding, with all that consummate skill which he employs in developing his story; nor in Smollett, with all that vivacity and heartiness of purpose with which he carries on his narrative.

Of Smollett's poems much does not remain to be said. The Regicide is such a tragedy as might be expected from a clever youth of eighteen. The language is declamatory, the thoughts inflated, and the limits of nature and verisimilitude transgressed in describing the characters and passions. Yet there are passages not wanting in poetical vigour.

His two satires have so much of the rough flavour of Juvenal, as to retain some relish, now that the occasion which produced them has passed away.

The Ode to Independence, which was not pub-

lished till after his decease, amid much of common place, has some very nervous lines. The personification itself is but an awkward one. The term is scarcely abstract and general enough to be invested with the attributes of an ideal being.

In the Tears of Scotland, patriotism has made him eloquent and pathetic; and the Ode to Leven Water is sweet and natural. None of the other pieces, except the Ode to Mirth, which has some sprightliness of fancy, deserve to be particularly noticed.

THOMAS WARTON.

THE life of Thomas Warton, by Dr. Mant, now Bishop of Killaloe, prefixed to the edition of his poems published at Oxford, is drawn from sources so authentic, and detailed with so much exactness, that little remains to be added to the circumstances which it relates.

THOMAS WARTON was descended from a very respectable family in Yorkshire. His grandfather, Anthony Warton, was rector of a village in Hampshire; and his father was a fellow of Magdalen College, and Poetry Professor in the University of Oxford. His mother, daughter of Joseph Richard-

son, who was also a clergyman, gave birth to three children:—Joseph, of whom some account will hereafter be given, Thomas, and Jane. Thomas was born at Basingstoke, in 1728; and very early in life afforded promise of his future excellence. A letter, addressed to his sister from school when he was about nine years of age, containing an epigram on Leander, was preserved with affectionate regard by their brother, Dr. Warton. What school it was, that may claim the honour of contributing to the instruction of one who was afterwards so distinguished as a scholar, has not been recorded.

On the 16th of March, 1743, he was admitted a commoner of Trinity College, Oxford; and about two years after lost his father,—a volume of whose poems was, soon after his death, printed by subscription, by his eldest son Joseph, with two elegiac poems to his memory, one by the editor, the other by his daughter above-mentioned. The latter of these tributes is termed by Mr. Crowe, in a note to one of his eloquent Crewian Orations,—"Ode tenera, simplex, venusta,"—"tender, simple, and beautiful."

In 1745 he published his Pastoral Eclogues, which Mr. Chalmers has added to the collection of his poems; and in the same year he published, without his name, the Pleasures of Melancholy; having, perhaps, been influenced in the choice of a subject, thus sombre, by the loss of his parent. In

this poem, his imitations of Milton are so frequent and palpable, as to discover the timid flight of a young writer not daring to quit the track of his guide. Yet by some (as appears from the letters between Mrs. Carter and Miss Talbot) it was ascribed to Akenside. In 1746 was produced his Progress of Discontent,—a paraphrase on one of his own exercises, made at the desire of Dr. Huddesford, the head of his college.

His next effort attracted more general notice. In consequence of some disgrace which the University had incurred with Government, by its supposed attachment to the Stuart family, Mason had written his Isis, an Elegy; and in 1749, Warton was encouraged by Dr. Huddesford to publish an answer to it, with the title of the Triumph of Isis. It may naturally be supposed, that so spirited a defence of Oxford against the aspersions of her antagonist would be welcomed with ardour; and among other testimonies of approbation which it received, Dr. King, whose character is eulogized in the poem, coming into the bookseller's shop, and inquiring whether five guineas would be acceptable to the author, left for him an order for that sum. After an interval of twenty-eight years, his rival, Mason, was probably sincere in the opinion he gave,—that Warton had much excelled him both "in poetical imagery, and in the correct flow of his versification."

He now became a contributor to a monthly mis-

cellany called The Student; in which, besides his Progress of Discontent, were inserted A Panegyric on Oxford Ale, a professed imitation of the Splendid Shilling; The Author confined to College; and A Version of the twenty-ninth chapter of Job.

His two degrees having been taken at about the usual intervals, in 1751 he succeeded to a fellowship of his college, where he found a peaceful and unenvied retreat for the remainder of his days, without betraying any ambition of those dignities,—which, to the indignation of Bishop Warburton, were not conferred upon him.

At this time appeared his Newmarket, a Satire; An Ode written for Music, performed in the University Theatre; and two copies of verses, one in Latin, the other in English, on the Death of Frederic, Prince of Wales.

In 1753, his Ode on the approach of Summer,—The Pastoral, in the Manner of Spenser—(which has not much resemblance to that writer), and Verses inscribed on a beautiful Grotto,—were printed in the Union, a poetical miscellany, selected by him, and edited at Edinburgh.

The next year we find him employed in drawing up a body of statutes for the Radcliffe Library, by the desire of Dr. Huddesford, then Vice-Chancellor; in assisting Colman and Thornton in the Connoisseur; and in publishing his Observations on the

Faerie Queene of Spenser, which he afterwards enlarged from one to two volumes. Johnson complimented him "for having shewn to all, who should hereafter attempt the study of our ancient authors, the way to success, by directing them to the perusal of the books which their author had read;" a method of illustration which since, certainly, has not wanted imitators. Much of his time must have been now diverted from his favourite pursuits, by his engagement in the instruction of college pupils. During his excursions in the summer vacations, to different parts of England, he appears to have occupied himself in making remarks on such specimens of Gothic and Saxon architecture as came in his way. His manuscript on this subject was in the possession of his brother, since whose decease, unfortunately, it has not been discovered. Some incidental observations on our ancient buildings, introduced into his book on the Faerie Queene, are enough to make us regret the loss. The poetical reader would have been better pleased if he had fulfilled an intention he had of translating the Argonautics of Apollonius Rhodius.

Though it was not the lot of Warton to attain distinction in his clerical profession, yet literary honours, more congenial to his taste and habits, awaited him. In 1756, he was elected Professor of Poetry at Oxford, and faithfully performed the duties of his office,

by recommending the purest models of antiquity in lectures which are said to have been "remarkable for elegance of diction, and justness of observation," and interspersed with translations from the Greek epigrammatists.

To Johnson he had already rendered a material service by his exertions to procure him the degree of Master of Arts, by diploma; and he increased the obligation, by contributing some notes to his edition of Shakspeare, and three papers to The Idler. The imputation cast on one, from whom such kindness had been received, of his "being the only man of genius without a heart," must have been rather the effect of spleen in Johnson, than the result of just observation; and if either these words, or the verses in ridicule of his poems—

> Endless labour all along,
> Endless labour to be wrong;
> Trick'd in antique ruff and bonnet,
> Ode, and elegy, and sonnet;

had been officiously repeated to Warton, we cannot much wonder at what is told, of his passing Johnson in a bookseller's shop without speaking, or at the tears which Johnson is related to have shed at that mark of alienation in his former friend.

A Description of Winchester, and a Burlesque on the Oxford Guides, or books professing to give an

account of the University, both anonymous, are among the next publications attributed to his pen.

In 1758, he made a selection of Latin inscriptions in verse; and printed it, together with notes, under the title of Inscriptionum Romanarum Metricarum Delectus; and then first undertook, at the suggestion it is said of Judge Blackstone, the splendid edition of Theocritus, which made its appearance twelve years after. The papers left by Mr. St. Amand,* formed the

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* There is a little memoir of James St. Amand, in the preface, that will interest some readers. He was of Lincoln College, Oxford, about 1705, where he had scarcely remained a year, before his ardour for Greek literature induced him to visit Italy, chiefly with a view of searching MSS. that might serve for an edition of Theocritus. In Italy, before he had reached his twentieth year, he was well known to the learned world, and had engaged the esteem of many eminent men; among others, of Vincenzo Gravina, Niccolo Valletto, Fontanini, Quirino, Anton Maria Salvini, and Henry Newton, the English Ambassador to the Duke of Tuscany. Their letters to him are preserved in the Bodleian. By his researches into the MSS. of Italian libraries, he assisted his learned friends, Kuster, Le Clerc, Potter, Hudson, and Kennet, and other literary characters of that time, in their several pursuits. He then returned to England by way of Geneva and Paris, well laden with treasures derived from the foreign libraries, all which, with a large collection of valuable books, he bequeathed to the Bodleian. He died about 1750. He

basis of this work: to them were added some valuable criticisms by Toup; and though the arrangement of the whole may be justly charged with a want of clearness and order, and Dr. Gaisford has since employed much greater exactness and diligence in his edition of the same author, yet the praise of a most entertaining and delightful variety cannot be denied to the notes of Warton. In a dissertation on the Bucolic poetry of the Greeks, he shews that species of composition to have been derived from the ancient comedy; and exposes the dream of a golden age.

> La bella età dell' or unqua non venne,
> Nacque da nostre menti
> Entro il vago pensiero,
> E nel nostro desio chiaro divenne.
>
> *Guidi.*

The characters in Theocritus, are shewn to be dis-

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desisted from his intention of publishing Theocritus, either from ill health, or weariness of his work, or some fear about its success. His preparations for this edition, together with some notes on Pindar (an edition of which he also meditated), Aristophanes, the Argonautics of Apollonius Rhodius, Demosthenes, and others, remain in the Bodleian. Dr. Shaw, in his edition of Apollonius Rhodius, has since made use of his notes on that poet, and pays a tribute to his critical abilities in the preface.

tinguished into three classes,—herdsmen, shepherds, and goatherds; the first of which was superior to the next, as that in its turn was to the third; and this distinction is proved to have been accurately observed, as to allusions and images. The discrimination seems to have been overlooked by Virgil: in which instance, no less than in all the genuine graces of pastoral poetry, he is inferior to the Sicilian.* The contempt with which Warton speaks of those eminent and unfortunate Greek scholars, who diffused the learning of their country over Europe, after the capture of Constantinople, and whom he has here termed "Græculi famelici," is surely reprehensible. But for their labours, Britain might never have required an editor of Theocritus.

In 1760, he contributed to the Biographia Britannica a Life of Sir Thomas Pope, twice, subsequently published, in a separate form, with considerable enlargements: in the two following years he wrote a Life of Dr. Bathurst, and in his capacity of Poetry

* Warton's distinction between them is well imagined. "Similis est Theocritus amplo cuidam pascuo per se satis fœcundo, herbis pluribus frugiferis floribusque pulchris abundanti, dulcibus etiam fluviis uvido: similis Virgilius horto distincto nitentibus areolis; ubi larga fiorum copia, sed qui studiose dispositi, curâque meliore nutriti, atque exculti diligenter, olim huc a pascuo illo majore transferebantur."

Professor, composed Verses on the Death of George II., the Marriage of his Successor, and the Birth of the Heir Apparent, which, together with his Complaint of Cherwell, made a part of the Oxford Collections. Several of his humorous pieces were soon after (in 1764) published in the Oxford Sausage, the preface to which he also wrote; and in 1766, he edited the Greek Anthology of Cephalas. In 1767, he took the degree of Bachelor in Divinity; and in 1771, was chosen a Fellow of the Antiquarian Society; and on the nomination of the Earl of Lichfield, Chancellor of the University, was collated to the Rectory of Kiddington, Oxfordshire, a benefice of small value. Ten years after, he drew up a History of his Parish, and published it as a specimen of a Parochial History of Oxfordshire. Meanwhile, he was engaged in an undertaking, of higher interest to the national antiquities and literature.

In illustrating the origin, and tracing the progress of our vernacular poetry, we had not kept pace with the industry of our continental neighbours. To supply this deficiency, a work had been projected by Pope, and was now contemplated, and indeed entered on, by Gray and Mason, in conjunction. We cannot but regret, that Gray relinquished the undertaking, as he did, on hearing into whose hands it had fallen, since he would (as the late publication of his papers by Mr. Mathias has shewn) have brought to the task

a more accurate and extensive acquaintance with those foreign sources from whence our early writers derived much of their learning, and would, probably, have adopted a better method, and more precision in the general disposition of his materials. Yet there is no reason to complain of the way in which Warton has acquitted himself, as far as he has gone. His History of English Poetry is a rich mine, in which, if we have some trouble in separating the ore from the dross, there is much precious metal to reward our pains. The first volume of this laborious work was published in 1774; two others followed, in 1778, and in 1781; and some progress had been made at his decease in printing the fourth. In 1777, he increased the poetical treasure of his country by a volume of his own poems, of which there was a demand for three other editions before his death. In 1782, we find him presented by his college to the donative of Hill Farrance, in Somersetshire, and employed in publishing an Inquiry into the Authenticity of the Poems attributed to Thomas Rowley, and Verses on Sir Joshua Reynolds's painted window at New College: about the same time, probably, he was chosen a member of the Literary Club.

In 1785, he edited Milton's minor poems, with very copious illustrations; and in the year following, was elected to the Camden Professorship of History, and was appointed to succeed Whitehead, as Poet

Laureate. In his inaugural speech as Camden Professor, subjoined to the edition of his poetical works by Dr. Mant, he has shewn that the public duties required at the first foundation of the Professorship, owing to the improvement in the course of academical studies, are rendered no longer necessary. From one who had already voluntarily done so much, it would have been ungracious to exact the performance of public labours not indispensably requisite. In the discharge of his function as Laureate, he still continued, as he had long ago professed himself to be,—

Too free in servile courtly phrase to fawn;

and had the wish been gratified,—expressed by himself before his appointment, or by Gibbon after it,—that the annual tribute might be dispensed with, we should have lost some of his best lyric effusions.

Till his sixty-second year, he had experienced no interruption to a vigorous state of health. Then a seizure of the gout compelled him to seek relief from the use of the Bath waters; and he returned from that place to college, with the hope of a recovery from his complaint. But on the 20th of May, 1790, between ten and eleven o'clock at night, as he was sitting in the common room with two of the college fellows, and in higher spirits than usual, a paralytic affection deprived him of his speech. Some indistinct sounds only, in which it was thought the name of

his friend, Mr. Price, the librarian of the Bodleian, was heard, escaped him, and he expired on the day but one after. His funeral was honoured by the attendance of the Vice-Chancellor, and a numerous train of followers, to the ante-chapel of his college, where he is interred, with a very plain inscription to his memory.

His person was short and thick, though in the earlier part of his life he had been thought handsome. His face, latterly, became somewhat rubicund, and his utterance so confused, that Johnson compared it to the gobbling of a turkey. The portrait of him by Reynolds, besides the resemblance of the features, is particularly characterized by the manner in which the hand is drawn, so as to give it a great air of truth. He was negligent in his dress; and so little studious of appearances, that having despatched his labours, while others were yet in bed, he might have been found, at the usual hours of study, loitering on the banks of his beloved Cherwell, or in the streets, following the drum and fife, a sound which was known to have irresistible attraction for his ears,—a spectator at a military parade, or even one amongst a crowd at a public execution. He retained to old age the amiable simplicity and unsuspecting frankness of boyhood: his affection for his brother, to whose society at Winchester he latterly retired from college, during the vacations in summer, does not seem ever

to have suffered any abatement; and his manners were tranquil and unassuming. The same amenity and candour of disposition, which marked him in private life, pervade his writings, except on some few occasions, when his mind is too much under the influence of party feelings. This bias inclined him, not only to treat the character of Milton with a most undue asperity, but even to extenuate the atrocities committed under the government of Mary, and somewhat to depreciate the worth of those divines, whose attachment to the reformed religion led them to suffer death in her reign.

The writer of this paper has been told by an Italian, who was acquainted with Warton, that his favourite book in the Italian language (of which his knowledge was far from exact) was the Gerusalemme Liberata. Both the stately phrase, and the theme of that poem, were well suited to him.

Among the poets of the second class, he deserves a distinguished place. He is almost equally pleasing in his gayer, and in his more exalted moods. His mirth is without malice or indecency, and his seriousness without gloom.

In his lyrical pieces, if we seek in vain for the variety and music of Dryden, the tender and moral sublime of Gray, or the enthusiasm of Collins, yet we recognize an attention ever awake to the appear-

ances of nature, and a mind stored with the images of classical and Gothic antiquity. Though his diction is rugged, it is like the cup in Pindar, which Telamon stretches out to Alcides, χρυσῷ πεφρικυῖαν, rough with gold, and embost with curious imagery. A lover of the ancients would, perhaps, be offended, if the birth-day ode, beginning

> Within what fountain's craggy cell
> Delights the goddess Health to dwell?

were compared, as to its subject, with that of the Theban bard, on the illness of Hiero, which opens with a wish that Chiron were yet living, in order that the poet might consult him on the case of the Syracusan monarch; and in its form, with that in which he asks of his native city, in whom of all her heroes she most delighted.

Among the odes, some of which might more properly be termed idylliums, The Hamlet is of uncommon beauty; the landscape is truly English, and has the truth and tenderness of Gainsborough's pencil. Those To a Friend on his leaving a Village in Hampshire, and the First of April, are entitled to similar praise. The Crusade, The Grave of King Arthur, and most of the odes composed for the court, are in a higher strain. In the Ode written at Vale Royal Abbey, is a striking image, borrowed from some lent

verses, written by Archbishop Markham, and printed in the second volume of that collection.

> High o'er the trackless heath, at midnight seen,
> No more the windows ranged in long array
> (Where the tall shaft and fretted arch between
> Thick ivy twines) the taper'd rites betray.
>
> *Prodidit arcanas arcta fenestra faces.*

His sonnets have been highly and deservedly commended by no less competent a judge than Mr. Coleridge. They are alone sufficient to prove (if any proof were wanting) that this form of composition is not unsuited to our language. One of our longest, as it is one of our most beautiful poems, the Faerie Queene, is written in a stanza which demands the continual recurrence of an equal number of rhymes; and the chief objection to our adopting the sonnet is the paucity of our rhymes.

The lines to Sir Joshua Reynolds are marked by the happy turn of the compliment, and by the strength and harmony of the versification, at least as far as the formal couplet measure will admit of those qualities. They need not fear a comparison with the verses addressed by Dryden to Kneller, or by Pope to Jervas.

His Latin compositions are nearly as excellent as his English. The few hendecasyllables he has left, have more of the vigour of Catullus than those by

Flaminio; but Flaminio excels him in delicacy. The Mons Catharinæ contains nearly the same images as Gray's Ode on a Prospect of Eton College. In the word "cedrĭnæ," which occurs in the verses on Trinity College Chapel, he has, we believe, erroneously made the penultimate long. Dr. Mant has observed another mistake in his use of the word "Tempe" as a feminine noun, in the lines translated from Akenside. When in his sports with his brother's scholars at Winchester he made their exercises for them, he used to ask the boy how many faults he would have: —one such would have been sufficient for a lad near the head of the school.

His style in prose, though marked by a character of magnificence, is at times stiff and encumbered. He is too fond of alliteration in prose as well as in verse; and the cadence of his sentences is too evidently laboured.

JOSEPH WARTON.

THE Memoirs of Joseph Warton, by Dr. Wooll, the present Head-master of Rugby school, is a book which, although it contains a faithful representation of his life and character by one who had been his pupil, and though it is enriched with a collection of letters between some of the men most distinguished in literature during his time, is yet so much less known than it deserves, that in speaking of it to Mr. Hayley, who had been intimate with Warton, and to whom some of the letters are addressed, I found him ignorant of its contents. It will supply me with much of what I have to relate concerning the subject of it.

There is no instance in this country of two brothers having been equally celebrated for their skill in poetry with Joseph and Thomas Warton. What has been already told of the parentage of the one renders it unnecessary to say more in this respect of the other. He was born at Dunsfold, in Surrey, under the roof of his maternal grandfather, in the beginning of 1722. Like his brother, he experienced the care of an affectionate parent, who did the utmost his scanty means

would allow to educate them both as scholars; but with this difference, that Joseph being three-and-twenty years old at the time of Mr. Warton's decease, whereas Thomas was but seventeen, was more capable of appreciating, as it deserved, the tenderness of such a father. To what has been before said of this estimable man, I have to add, that his poems, of which I had once a cursory view, appeared to me to merit more notice than they have obtained; and that his version of Fracastorio's pathetic lamentation on the death of his two sons particularly engaged my attention. Suavis adeo poeta ac doctus, is the testimony borne to him by one* who will himself have higher claims of the same kind on posterity.

Having been some time at New College school, but principally taught by his father till he was fourteen years old, Joseph was then admitted on the foundation of Winchester, under Dr. Sandby. Here, together with two of his school-fellows, of whom Collins was one, he became a contributor to the Gentleman's Magazine. Johnson, who then assisted in editing that miscellany, had sagacity enough to distinguish, from the rest, a few lines that were sent by Collins, which, though not remarkable for excellence, ought now to take their place among his other poems.

In 1740, Warton being superannuated at Win-

* Mr. Crowe, in one of his Crewian Orations.

chester, was entered of Oriel College, Oxford; and taking his bachelor's degree, in 1744, was ordained to his father's curacy at Basingstoke. Having lost his father about a year after, he removed to the curacy of Chelsea, in February, 1746. Near this time, I suppose a letter, that is without date of time or place, to have been written to his brother. As it informs us of some particulars relating to Collins, of whom it is to be wished that more were known, I am tempted to transcribe it.

DEAR TOM,—You will wonder to see my name in an advertisement next week, so I thought I would apprize you of it. The case was this. Collins met me in Surrey, at Guildford races, when I wrote out for him my Odes, and he likewise communicated some of his to me: and being both in very high spirits, we took courage, resolved to join our forces, and to publish them immediately. I flatter myself, that I shall lose no honour by this publication, because I believe these Odes, as they now stand, are infinitely the best things I ever wrote. You will see a very pretty one of Collins's, on the Death of Colonel Ross before Tournay. It is addressed to a lady who was Ross's intimate acquaintance, and who, by the way, is Miss Bett Goddard. Collins is not to publish the Odes unless he gets ten guineas for them.

I returned from Milford last night, where I left Collins with my mother and sister, and he sets out to-day for London. I must now tell you, that I have

sent him your imitation of Horace's Blandusian Fountain, to be printed amongst ours, and which you shall own or not as you think proper. I would not have done this without your consent, but because I think it very poetically and correctly done, and will get you honour.

* * * *

You will let me know what the Oxford critics say. Adieu, dear Tom.

I am your most affectionate brother,

J. WARTON.

On this Dr. Wooll founds a conjecture, that Warton published a volume of poems conjointly with his brother and Collins; but adds, that after a diligent search he had not been able to discover it. I think it more likely that the design was abandoned. However this may be, it is certain that he himself published a volume of Odes in 1746, of which, as I learn from a note to the present Bishop of Killaloe's verses to his memory, a second edition appeared in the following year. To complete his recovery from the small-pox, which he had taken at Chelsea, he went, in May 1746, to Chobham; and then, after officiating for a few months at Chawton and Droxford, returned to his first curacy of Basingstoke. In the next year he was presented by the Duke of Bolton to the rectory of Wynslade, by which preferment he was enabled immediately to marry a young lady in that neighbourhood, of the name of Daman, to whom

he had been long attached. Of the country adjacent to Wynslade, Thomas Warton has given a very pleasing description in one of his sonnets, and in an "Ode sent to a friend, on his leaving a favourite village in Hampshire." Both were written on the occasion of his brother's absence, who had gone in the train of the Duke of Bolton to France. One motive, on which he went, would not now be thought quite creditable to a clergyman. It was that he might be at hand to join the Duke in marriage to his mistress, as soon as the Duchess, who was far gone in a dropsy, should be no more. Warton set out reluctantly, but with the hope that he might benefit his family by compliance. He had not been away five months, when the impatience for home came on him so strongly, that he quitted Montauban, where the Duke was residing, and made his way towards England by such conveyances as he could meet with; at one time in a courier's cart; at another, in the company of carriers who were travelling in Britanny. Thus he scrambled on to Bourdeaux, and till he reached St. Malo's, where he took ship and landed at Southampton. When he had been returned a month the Duchess died. He then asked permission to go back, and perform the marriage ceremony; but the chaplain of the embassy at Turin was already on his way for that purpose.

He was now once more at Wynslade, restored to a

domestic life, and the uninterrupted pursuit of his studies. Before going abroad, he had published (in 1749) his Ode on West's translation of Pindar; and after his return, employed himself in writing papers, chiefly on subjects of criticism, for the Adventurer, and in preparing for the press an edition of Virgil, which (in 1753) he published, together with Pitt's translation of the Æneid, his own of the Eclogues and Georgics, his notes on the whole, and several essays. The book has been found useful for schools; and was thought at the time to do him so much credit, that it obtained for him the degree of Master of Arts by diploma from the University of Oxford, and no doubt was instrumental in recommending him to the place of second master of Winchester School, to which he was appointed in 1755. In the meantime he had been presented by the Jervoise family to the rectory of Tunworth, and resided for a short time at that place.

In 1756, appeared the first volume of his Essay on the genius and writings of Pope, dedicated to Young. The name of the author was to have been concealed, but he does not seem to have kept his own secret very carefully, for it was immediately spoken of as his by Akenside, Johnson, and Dr. Birch. The second volume did not follow till after an interval of twenty-six years. The information contained in this essay, which is better known than his

other writings, is such as the recollection of a scholar, conversant in polite literature, might easily have supplied. He does not, like his brother, ransack the stores of antiquity for what has been forgotten, but deserves to be recalled; nor, like Hurd, exercise, on common materials, a refinement that gives the air of novelty to that with which we have been long familiar. He relaxes, as Johnson said of him, the brow of criticism into a smile. Though no longer in his desk and gown, he is still the benevolent and condescending instructor of youth; a writer, more capable of amusing and tempting onwards, by some pleasant anticipations, one who is a novice in letters, than of satisfying the demands of those already initiated. He deserves some praise for having been one of the first who attempted to moderate the extravagant admiration for Pope, whom he considered as the poet of reason rather than of fancy; and to disengage us from the trammels of the French school. Some of those who followed have ventured much further, with success; but it was something to have broken the ice. I do not know that he published anything else while he remained at Winchester, except* an edition of Sir Philip Sydney's Defence of Poesy, and Observations on Eloquence and Poetry from the Discoveries of Ben Jonson, in 1787. His literary exertions,

* Nichols's Literary Anecdotes, vol. ix.

and the attention he paid to the duties of his school, did not go unrewarded. In 1766 he was advanced to the Head-mastership of Winchester, and took his two degrees in divinity; in 1782, Bishop Lowth gave him a prebend of St. Paul's, and the rectory of Chorley, which he was allowed to exchange for Wickham, in Hants. In 1788, through the intervention of Lord Shannon with Mr. Pitt, he obtained a prebend of Winchester; and soon after, at the solicitation of Lord Malmesbury, was presented by the Bishop of that diocese to the rectory of Easton, which, in the course of a twelve-month, he exchanged for Upham.

In his domestic relations, he enjoyed as much happiness as prudence and affection could ensure him, but not unembittered by those disastrous accidents to which every father of a family is exposed. Some years after his marriage (1763) his letters to his brother discover him struggling under his anguish for the loss of a favourite daughter, who had died under inoculation, but striving to conceal his feelings for the sake of a wife whom he tenderly loved. In 1772, this wife was also taken from him, leaving him with six children. His second son, Thomas, fellow of New College, a man on whom the poetic spirit of the Wartons had descended, was found by him, one day when he returned from the college prayers, sitting in the chair in which he had left him after

dinner, without life. It was the termination of a disease under which he had long laboured. This happened in 1786; and before he had space to recover the blow, in four years after, his brother died. In 1773, he had solaced himself by a second marriage with Miss Nicholas, the daughter of Robert Nicholas, Esq. In both his matrimonial connexions, his sister described him as having been eminently fortunate.

The latter part of his life was spent in retirement and tranquillity. In 1793, he resigned the mastership of Winchester, and settled himself on his living of Wickham. He had intended to finish his brother's History of English Poetry, which wanted another volume to complete it; and might now have found time enough to accomplish the task. But an obstacle presented itself, by which it is likely that he was discouraged from proceeding. The description given by Daniel Prince, a respectable old bookseller at Oxford, of the state in which his brother's rooms were found at his decease, and of the fate that befell his manuscripts and his property, may be edifying to some future fellow of a college, who shall employ himself in similar pursuits.* "Poor Thomas Warton's papers were in a sad litter, and his brother Joe has made matters worse by confusedly cramming all

* Nichols's Literary Anecdotes, vol. ix.

together, sending them to Winchester, &c. Mr. Warton could not give so much as his old clothes; his very shoes, stockings, and wigs, laid about in abundance. Where could his money go? It must lay in paper among his papers, or be laid in a book; he could not, nor did not spend it; and his brother, on that score, is greatly disappointed."

A republication of Pope's works, with notes, offered him an easier occupation than the digesting of those scattered materials for the History of Poetry which he had thus assisted in disarranging. He was probably glad to escape from inaction, and set himself to parcel out his Essay into comments for this edition; which, in 1797, was published in nine volumes. His indiscretion, in adding to it some of Pope's productions which had been before excluded, has been most bitterly censured. That it would have been better to let them remain where they were can scarcely be questioned. But I should be more willing to regard the insertion of them as proof of his own simplicity, in suspecting no harm from what he had himself found to be harmless, than of any design to communicate injury to others. A long life, passed without blame, and in the faithful discharge of arduous duties, ought to have secured him from this misconstruction at its close. After all, the pieces objected to are such as are more offensive to good manners than dangerous to morality. There are some other of

Pope's writings, more likely to inflame the passions, which yet no one scruples to read; and Dr. Wooll has suggested that it was inconsistent to set up the writer as a teacher of virtue, and in the same breath to condemn his editor as a pander to vice.

He bestowed on his censurers no more consideration than they deserved, and went on to prepare an edition of Dryden for the press. Two volumes, with his notes, were completed, when his labours were finally broken off by a painful disease. His malady was an affection of the kidneys, which continued to harass him for some months, and ended in a fatal paralysis on the twenty-third of February, 1800, in the seventy-eighth year of his age.

He was interred in the cathedral at Winchester, where, by the contributions of his former scholars, a monument, executed by Mr. Flaxman, was raised to his memory, of a design so elegant, as the tomb of a poet has not often been honoured with. It is inscribed with the following epitaph—

H. S. E.
Josephus Warton, S. T. P.
Hujus Ecclesiæ
Prebendarius:
Scolæ Wintoniensis
Per annos fere triginta
Informator:
Poeta fervidus, facilis, expolitus:

Criticus eruditus, perspicax, elegans:
Obiit XXIII°. Feb. M.D.CCC.
Ætat. LXXVIII.
Hoc qualecunque
Pietatis monumentum
Præceptori optimo,
Desideratissimo,
Wiccamici sui.
P. C.

In the frankness of his disposition he appears to have resembled his brother, but with more liveliness and more love of general society. I have heard, that in the carelessness of colloquial freedom, he was apt to commit himself by hasty and undigested observations. As he did not aim at being very oracular himself, so he was unusually tolerant of ignorance in others. Of this, a diverting instance is recorded by Dr. Wooll: meeting in company with a lady who was a kinswoman of Pope's, he eagerly availed himself of the occasion offered for learning some new particulars concerning one by whom so much of his time and thoughts had been engaged. "Pray, Sir," began the lady, "did not you write a book about my cousin Pope?" "Yes, Madam;" was the reply. "They tell me 'twas vastly clever. He wrote a great many plays, did not he?" was the next question. "I never heard but of one attempt, Madam;" said Warton, beginning perhaps to expect some

discovery, when his hopes were suddenly crushed by an "Oh! no," from the lady, "I beg your pardon, Sir. That was Mr. Shakspeare. I always confound them." He had the good breeding to conceal his disappointment, and to take a courteous leave of the kinswoman of Pope.

He was regarded with great affection by those whom he had educated. The opinions of a man so long experienced in the characters of children, and in the best methods of instruction, are on these subjects entitled to much notice. "He knew," says his biographer and pupil, "that the human mind developed itself progressively, but not always in the same consistent degrees, or at periods uniformly similar. He conjectured, therefore, that the most probable method of ensuring some valuable improvement to the generality of boys was not to exact what the generality are incapable of performing. As a remedy for inaccurate construction, arising either from apparent idleness or inability, he highly approved, and sedulously imposed, translation. Modesty, timidity, or many other constitutional impediments, may prevent a boy from displaying before his master, and in the front of his class, those talents of which privacy, and a relief from these embarrassments, will often give proof. These sentiments were confirmed by that most infallible test, experience; as he declared (within a few years of his death) that

" the best scholars he had sent into the world were those whom, whilst second master, he had thus habituated to translation, and given a capacity of comparing and associating the idiom of the dead languages with their own."

It is pleasant to observe the impression which men, who have engrossed to themselves the attention of posterity, have made on one another, when chance has brought them together. Of Mason, whom he fell in with at York, he tells his brother, that " he is the most easy, best natured, agreeable man he ever met with." In the next year, he met with Goldsmith, and observed of him, " that of all solemn coxcombs, he was the first, yet sensible; and that he affected to use Johnson's hard words in conversation."

Soon after the first volume of his Essay on Pope had been published, Lyttleton, then newly raised to the peerage, gave him his scarf, and submitted some of his writings, before they were printed, to his inspection.

Harris, the author of Hermes, and Lowth, were others in whose friendship he might justly have prided himself.

He was one of the few that did not shrink from a collision with Johnson; who could so ill endure a shock of this kind, that on one occasion he cried out impatiently, " Sir, I am not used to contradiction."

"It would be better for yourself and your friends, Sir, if you were;" was the natural retort. Their common friends interfered, to prevent a ruder altercation.

Like Johnson, he delighted in London, where he regularly indulged himself by passing the holidays at Christmas. His fondness for everything relating to a military life was a propensity that he shared with his brother; and while the one might have been seen following a drum and fife at Oxford, the other, by the sprightliness of his conversation, had drawn a circle of red coats about him at the St. James's Coffee House, where he frequently breakfasted. Both of them were members of the Literary Club, set on foot by Sir Joshua Reynolds.

This gaiety of temper did not hinder him from discharging his clerical office in a becoming manner. "His style of preaching," we are told by Mr. Wooll, "was unaffectedly earnest and impressive; and the dignified solemnity with which he read the Liturgy, particularly the Communion Service, was remarkably awful."

His reputation as a critic and a scholar has preserved his poetry from neglect. Of his Odes, that to Fancy, written when he was very young, is one that least disappoints us by a want of poetic feeling. Yet if we compare it with that by Collins, on the Poetical Character, we shall see of how much higher

beauty the same subject was capable. In the Ode to Evening, he has again tried his strength with Collins. There are some images of rural life in it that have the appearance of being drawn from nature, and which therefore please.

Hail, meek-eyed maiden, clad in sober grey,
Whose soft approach the weary woodman loves,
As homeward bent to kiss his prattling babes,
He jocund whistles through the twilight groves.

* * * * * *

* * * * * *

To the deep wood the clamorous rooks repair,
Light skims the swallow o'er the watery scene,
And from the sheep-cotes, and fresh-furrow'd field,
Stout ploughmen meet to wrestle on the green.

The swain that artless sings on yonder rock,
His nibbling sheep and lengthening shadow spies;
Pleased with the cool, the calm, refreshful hour,
And the hoarse hummings of unnumber'd flies.

But these pretty stanzas are interrupted by the mention of Phœbus, the Dryads, old Sylvan, and Pan. The Ode to Content is in the same metre as his school-fellow's Ode to Evening; but in the numbers, it is very inferior both to that and to Mrs. Barbauld's Ode to Spring.

In his Dying Indian, he has produced a few lines of extraordinary force and pathos. The rest of his

poems, in blank verse, are for the most part of an indifferent structure.

In his Translations from Virgil, he will probably be found to excel Dryden as much in correctness, as he falls short of him in animation and harmony.

When his Odes were first published, Gray perceived the author to be devoid of invention, but praised him for a very poetical choice of expression, and for a good ear, and even thus perhaps a little over-rated his powers. But our lyric poetry was not then what it has since been made by Gray himself, the younger Warton, Mason, Russell, and one or two writers now living.

If he had enjoyed more leisure, it is probable that he might have written better; for he was solicitous not to lose any distinction to be acquired by his poetry; and took care to reclaim a copy of humorous verses, entitled, an Epistle from Thomas Hearne, which had been attributed by mistake to his brother, among whose poems it is still printed.

CHRISTOPHER ANSTEY.

An account of Christopher Anstey, written by his second son, is prefixed to the handsome edition of his works, printed at London, in 1808. He was born on the thirty-first of October, 1724, and was the son of Doctor Anstey, rector of Brinkley, in Cambridgeshire, a living in the gift of St. John's College, Cambridge; of which the Doctor had formerly been fellow and tutor. His mother was Mary, daughter of Anthony Thompson, Esq. of Trumpington, in the same county. They had no offspring but our poet, and a daughter born some years before him.

His father was afflicted with a total deafness for so considerable a portion of his life, as never to have heard the sound of his son's voice; and was thus rendered incapable of communicating to him that instruction which he might otherwise have derived from a parent endowed with remarkable acuteness of understanding. He was, therefore, sent very early to school at Bury St. Edmunds. Here he continued, under the tuition of the Rev. Arthur Kinsman, till he was removed to Eton; on the foundation of which school he was afterwards placed.

His studies having been completed with great credit

to himself, under Doctor George, the head-master of Eton, in the year 1742 he succeeded to a scholarship of King's College, Cambridge, where his classical attainments were not neglected. He was admitted in 1745 to a fellowship of his college; and, in the next year, he took his degree of Bachelor of Arts. He now resided chiefly in the University, where his resistance to an innovation, attempted to be introduced into King's College, involved him in a dispute which occasioned the degree of Master to be refused him. That College had immemorially asserted for its members an exemption from the performance of those public exercises demanded of the rest of the University as a qualification for their degrees. This right was now questioned; and it was required of the Bachelor Fellows of King's, that they should compose and pronounce a Latin oration in the public schools. Such an infringement of privilege was not to be tamely endured. After some opposition made by Anstey, in common with the other junior Fellows, the exercise in dispute was at lenth exacted. But Anstey, who was the senior Bachelor of the year, and to whose lot it therefore fell first to deliver this obnoxious declamation, contrived to frame it in such a manner, as to cast a ridicule on the whole proceeding. He was accordingly interrupted in the recitation of it, and ordered to compose another; in which, at the same time that he pretended to ex-

culpate himself from his former offence, he continued in the same vein of raillery. Though his degree was withheld in consequence of this pertinacity, yet it produced the desired effect of maintaining for the College its former freedom.

While an under-graduate, he had distinguished himself by his Latin verses, called the Tripos Verses; and, in 1748, by a poem, in the same language, on the Peace; printed in the Cambridge Collection.

His quarrel with the senior part of the University did not deprive him of his fellowship. He was still occasionally an inmate of the College, and did not cease to be a Fellow, till he came into the possession of the family estate at his mother's death, in 1754.

In two years after he married Anne, third daughter of Felix Calvert, Esq. of Albury-Hall, in Hertfordshire, and the sister of John Calvert, Esq. one of his most intimate friends, who was returned to that and many successive Parliaments, for the borough of Hertford. "By this most excellent lady," says his biographer, with the amiable warmth of filial tenderness, "who was allowed to possess every endowment of person, and qualification of mind and disposition which could render her interesting and attractive in domestic life, and whom he justly regarded as the pattern of every virtue, and the source of all his happiness, he lived in uninterrupted and undiminished esteem and affection for nearly half a

century; and by her (who for the happiness of her family is still living) he had thirteen children, of whom eight only survive him."

This long period is little checquered with events. Having no taste for public business, and his circumstances being easy and independent, he passed the first fourteen years at his seat in Cambridgeshire, in an alternation of study and the recreations of rural life, in which he took much pleasure. But, at the end of that time, the loss of his sister gave a shock to his spirits, which they did not speedily recover. That she was a lady of superior talents is probable, from her having been admitted to a friendship and correspondence with Mrs. Montague, then Miss Robinson. The effect which this deprivation produced on him was such as to hasten the approach, and perhaps to aggravate the violence, of a bilious fever, for the cure of which by Doctor Heberden's advice, he visited Bath, and by the use of those waters was gradually restored to health.

In 1766 he published his Bath Guide, from the press of Cambridge; a poem, which aiming at the popular follies of the day, and being written in a very lively and uncommon style, rapidly made its way to the favour of the public. At its first appearance, Gray, who was not easily pleased, in a letter to one of his friends observed, that it was the only thing in

fashion, and that it was a new and original kind of humour. Soon after the publication of the second edition, he sold the copy-right for two hundred pounds to Dodsley, and gave the profits previously accruing from the work to the General Hospital at Bath. Dodsley, about ten years after his purchase, candidly owned that the sale had been more productive to him than that of any other book in which he had before been concerned; and with much liberality restored the copy-right to the author.

In 1767 he wrote a short Elegy on the Death of the Marquis of Tavistock; and the Patriot, a Pindaric Epistle, intended to bring into discredit the practice of prize-fighting.

Not long after he was called to serve the office of high-sheriff for the county of Cambridge. In 1770 he quitted his seat there for a house which he purchased in Bath. The greater convenience of obtaining instruction for a numerous family, the education of which had hitherto been superintended by himself, was one of the motives that induced him to this change of habitation.

The Heroic Epistle to Sir William Chambers appearing soon after his arrival at Bath, and being by many imputed to a writer who had lately so much distinguished himself by his talent for satire, he was at considerable pains to disavow that publication;

and by some lines containing a deserved compliment to his sovereign, gave a sufficient pledge for the honesty of his disclaimer.

In 1776, a poem entitled An Election Ball, founded on a theme proposed by Lady Miller, who held a sort of little poetical court at her villa at Batheaston, did not disappoint the expectations formed of the author of the Bath Guide. It was at first written in the Somersetshire dialect, but was afterwards judiciously stripped of its provincialism.

About 1786 he entertained a design of collecting his poems, and publishing them together. But the painful recollections which this task awakened, of those friends and companions of his youth who had been separated from him by death during so long a period, made him relinquish his intention. He committed, however, to the press, translations of some of Gay's Fables, which had been made into Latin, chiefly with a view to the improvement of his children; an Alcaic Ode to Doctor Jenner, on the discovery of the Cowpock; and several short poems in his own language. "His increasing years," to use the words of his son, "stole inperceptibly on the even tenor of his life, and gradually lessened the distance of his journey through it, without obscuring the serenity of the prospect. Unimpeded by sickness, and unclouded by sorrow, or any serious misfortune, his life was a

life of temperance, of self-denial, and of moderation, in all things; and of great regularity. He rose early in the morning, *ante diem poscens chartas*, and was constant on horseback at his usual hour, and in all seasons. His summers were uniformly passed at Cheltenham, with his family, during the latter part of his life; and upon his return to Bath in the autumn, he fell habitually into the same unruffled scenes of domestic ease and tranquillity, rendered every day more joyous and interesting to him by the increase of his family circle, and the enlargement of his hospitable table; and by many circumstances and occurrences connected with the welfare of his children, which gave him infinite delight and satisfaction."

At the beginning of 1805, he experienced a sudden and general failure of his bodily faculties, and a correspondent depressure of mind. The little confidence he placed in the power of medicine made him reluctantly comply with the wishes of his friends, that he should take the opinion of Doctor Haygarth. Yet he was not without hope of alleviation to his complaints from change of air; and, therefore, removed from Bath to the house of his son-in-law, Mr. Bosanquet, in Wiltshire. Here having at first revived a little, he soon relapsed, and declining gradually, expired in the eighty-first year of his age, without apparent suffering, in the possession of his intellectual powers, and,

according to the tender wish of Pindar for one of his patrons—

ὑιῶν, Ψαῦμι, παρισταμένων,

in the midst of his children.

He was buried in the parish church of Walcot, in the city of Bath, in the same vault with his fourth daughter the wife of Rear-Admiral Sotheby, and her two infant children.

A cenotaph has been erected to his memory among the poets of his country in Westminster Abbey, by his eldest son, the Rev. Christopher Anstey, with the following inscription :—

M.S.
Christopheri Anstey, Arm.
Alumni Etonensis,
Et Collegii Regalis apud Cantabrigienses olim Socii,
Poetæ,
Literis elegantioribus adprimè ornati,
Et inter principes Poetarum,
Qui in eodem genere floruerunt,
Sedem eximiam tenentis.
Ille annum circiter
MDCCLXX.
Rus suum in agro Cantabrigiensi
Mutavit Bathoniâ,
Quem locum ei præter omne dudum arrisisse
Testis est, celeberrimum illud Poema,
Titulo inde ducto insignitum :
Ibi deinceps sex et triginta annos commoratus,
Obiit A.D. MDCCCV.
Et ætatis suæ
Octogesimo primo.

To this there is an encomium added, which its prolixity hinders me from inserting.

A painter and a poet were, perhaps, never more similar to each other in their talents than the contemporaries Bunbury and Anstey. There is in both an admirable power of seizing the ludicrous and the grotesque in their descriptions of persons and incidents in familiar life; and this accompanied by an elegance which might have seemed scarcely compatible with that power. There is in both an absence of any extraordinary elevation or vigour; which we do not regret, because we can hardly conceive but that they would be less pleasing if they were in any respect different from what they are. Each possesses a perfect facility and command over his own peculiar manner, which has secured him from having any successful imitator. Yet as they were both employed in representing the fortuitous and transient follies, which the face of society had put on in their own day, rather than in portraying the broader and more permanent distinctions of character and manners, it may be questioned whether they can be much relished out of their own country, and whether even there, the effect must not be weakened as fatuity and absurdity shall discover new methods of fastening ridicule upon themselves. They border more nearly on farce than comedy. They have neither of them any thing of fancy, that power which can give a new and higher

interest to the laughable itself, by mingling it with the marvellous, and which has placed Aristophanes so far above all his followers.

When Anstey ventures out of his own walk, he does not succeed so well. It is strange that he should have attempted a paraphrase of St. Paul's eulogium on Charity, after the same task had been so ably executed by Prior. If there is anything, however, that will bear repetition, in a variety of forms, it is that passage of scripture; and his verses though not equal to Prior's, may still be read with pleasure.

The Farmer's Daughter is a plain and affecting tale.

His Latin verses might well have been spared. In the translation of Gray's Elegy there is a more than usual crampness; occasioned, perhaps, by his having rendered into hexameters the stanzas of four lines, to which the elegiac measure of the Romans would have been better suited. The Epistola Poetica Familiaris, addressed to his friend Mr. Bamfylde, has more freedom. His scholarship did him better service when it suggested to him passages in the poets of antiquity, which he has parodied with singular happiness. Such is that imitated in one of Simkin's Letters:

> Do the gods such a noble ambition inspire?
> Or a god do we make of each ardent desire?

from Virgil's

Dine hunc ardorem mentibus addunt,
Euryale? an sua cuique deus fit dira cupido?

a parody that is not the less diverting, from its having been before gravely made by Tasso:

O dio l'inspira,
O l'uom del suo voler suo dio si face.

On the whole, he has the rare merit of having discovered a mode of entertaining his readers, which belongs exclusively to himself.

WILLIAM MASON.

It is to be regretted that no one of Mason's friends has thought fit to pay the same tribute of respect to his memory, which he had himself paid to that of his two poetical friends, Gray and Whitehead. In this dearth of authentic biography, we must be contented with such information concerning him, as either his own writings, or the incidental mention made of him by others, will furnish.

William Mason was born on the 23rd of February, 1725, at Hull, where his father, who was vicar of St. Trinity, resided. Whether he had any other preceptor in boyhood, except his parent, is not known.

That this parent was a man of no common attainments, appears from a poem which his son addressed to him when he had attained his twenty-first year, and in which he acknowledged with gratitude the instructions he had received from him in the arts of painting, poetry, and music. In 1742, he was admitted of St. John's College, Cambridge; and there, in 1744, the year in which Pope died, he wrote Musæus, a monody on that poet; and Il Bellicoso and Il Pacifico, a very juvenile imitation, as he properly calls it, of the Allegro and Penseroso. In 1745, he took his degree of Bachelor of Arts; and in the ensuing year, with a heavy heart, and with some fear lest he should grow old 'in northern clime,' bade farewell to Granta in an Ode, which commemorates the virtues of his tutor, Dr. Powell. He soon, however, returned; by his father's permission visited London; and removing from St. John's College to Pembroke Hall, was unexpectedly nominated Fellow of that society in 1747, when by the advice of Dr. Powell, he published Musæus. His fourth Ode expresses his delight at the prospect of being restored to the banks of the Cam. In a letter to a friend written this year, he boasts that his poem had already passed through three impressions. At the same time, he wrote his Ode to a Water Nymph, not without some fancy and elegance, in which his passion for the new style of gardening first shewed

itself; as his political bias did the year after in Isis, a poem levelled against the supposed Toryism of Oxford, and chiefly valuable for having called forth the Triumph of Isis, by Thomas Warton. To this he prefixed an advertisement, declaring that it would never have appeared in print, had not an interpolated copy, published in a country newspaper, scandalously misrepresented the principles of the author. Now commenced his intimacy with Gray, who was rather more than eight years his senior, a disparity which, at that period of life, is apt to prevent men at college from uniting very closely. His friend described him to Dr. Wharton as having much fancy, little judgment, and a good deal of modesty. "I take him," continued Gray, "for a good and well-meaning creature; but then he is really in simplicity a child, and loves every body he meets with: he reads little or nothing, writes abundance, and that with a design to make his fortune by it." On reviewing this character of himself twenty-five years after, he confessed, what cannot be matter of surprise, that this interval had made a considerable abatement in his general philanthropy; but denied having looked for more emolument from his publications than a few guineas to take him to a play or an opera. Gray's next report of him, after a year's farther acquaintance, is, that he grows apace into his good graces, as he knows him more; that "he is very ingenious, with

great good nature and simplicity; a little vain, but in so harmless and so comical a way, that it does not offend one at all; a little ambitious, but withal so ignorant in the world and its ways, that this does not hurt him in one's opinion; so sincere and so undisguised, that no mind with a spark of generosity would ever think of hurting him, he lies so open to injury; but so indolent, that if he cannot overcome this habit, all his good qualities will signify nothing at all." At this time, he published an Ode on the Installation of the Duke of Newcastle, which his friend, who was a laughing spectator of the ceremony, considers "the only entertainment that had any tolerable elegance," and thinks it, "with some little abatements, uncommonly well on such an occasion:" it was, however, very inferior to that which he himself composed when the Duke of Grafton was installed.

His next production (in 1751) was Elfrida, written on the model of the ancient Greek Tragedy; a delicate exotic, not made to thrive in our "cold septentrion blasts," and which, when it was long after transferred to the theatre by Colman, was unable to endure the rough aspect of a British audience. The poet complained of some trimming and altering that had been thought requisite by the manager on the occasion; and Colman, it is said, in return, threatened him with a chorus of Grecian washerwomen.

Matters were no better when Mason himself undertook to prepare it for the stage.

In 1752, we find him recommended to Lord Rockingham, by Mr. Charles Yorke, who thought him, said Warburton, likely to attach that Lord's liking to him, as he was a young nobleman of elegance, and loved painting and music. In the following year he lost his father, in the disposition of whose affairs he was less considered than he thought himself entitled to expect. What the reason for this partiality was, it would be vain to conjecture; nor have we any means of knowing whether the disappointment determined him to the choice of a profession which he made soon after (in 1754), when he entered into the church. From the following passage, in a letter of Warburton's, it appears that the step was not taken without some hesitation. "Mr. Mason has called on me. I found him yet unresolved whether he would take the living. I said, was the question about a mere secular employment, I should blame him without reserve if he refused the offer. But as I regarded going into orders in another light, I frankly owned to him he ought not to go unless he had a call; by which I meant, I told him, nothing fanatical or superstitious, but an inclination, and on that a resolution, to dedicate all his studies to the science of religion, and totally to abandon his poetry: he entirely agreed with me in thinking that decency,

reputation, and religion, all required this sacrifice of him, and that if he went into orders he intended to give it." This was surely an absurd squeamishness in one of the same profession, as Warburton was, who had begun his career by translations in prose and verse from Latin writers, had then mingled in the literary cabals of the day, and afterwards did not think his time misemployed in editing and commenting on Shakspeare and Pope. Yet he was unreasonable enough to continue his expectations that Mason should do what he had, without any apparent compunction, omitted to do himself; for after speaking of Brown, the unfortunate author of Barbarossa, who was also an ecclesiastic, he adds: "How much shall I honour one, who has a stronger propensity to poetry, and has got a greater name in it, if he performs his promise to me of putting away these idle baggages after his sacred espousal." After all, this proved to be one of the vows at which Jove laughs. The sacred espousal did not lessen his devotion to the idle baggages; and it is very doubtful whether he discharged his duties as King's Chaplain or Rector of Aston (for both which appointments he was indebted to the kindness of Lord Holdernesse) at all the worse for this attachment, which he was indeed barefaced enough to avow two years after by the publication of some of his odes. At his Rectory of Aston, in Yorkshire, he continued to live for great

part of his remaining life, with occasional absences in the metropolis, at Cambridge, or at York, where he was made Precentor and Canon of the Cathedral, and where his residence was therefore sometimes required. I have not learnt whether he had any other preferment. Hurd, in a letter written in 1768, mentions that the death of a Dr. Atwell threw a good living into his hands. Be this as it might, he was rich enough, and had an annual income of about fifteen hundred pounds at his death. Lord Orford says of him somewhere in his letters, that he intended to have refused a bishopric if it had been offered him. He might have spared himself the pains of coming to this resolution; for mitres, "though they fell on many a critic's head," and on that of his friend Hurd among the rest, did not seem adapted to the brows of a poet. When the death of Cibber had made the laurel vacant, he was informed that "being in orders he was thought merely on that account less eligible for the office than a layman." "A reason," said he, "so politely put, I was glad to hear assigned; and if I had thought it a weak one, they who know me will readily believe that I am the last man in the world who would have attempted to controvert it." Of the laurel, he probably was not more ambitious than of the mitre; though he was still so obstinate as to believe that he might unite the characters of a clerk and a poet, to which he would fain have super-

added that of a statist also. Caractacus, another tragedy on the ancient plan, but which made a better figure on the stage, appeared in 1759; and in 1762, three elegies. In 1769, Harris heard him preach at St. James's early prayers, and give a fling at the French for the invasion of Corsica. Thus politics, added his hearer, have entered the sanctuary. The sermon is the sixth in his printed collection. A fling at the French was at all times a favourite topic with him. In the discourse delivered before George III. on the Sunday preceding his Coronation, he has stretched the text a little that he may take occasion to descant on the blessings of civil liberty, and has quoted Montesquieu's opinion of the British Government. In praising our religious toleration, he is careful to justify our exception of the church of Rome from the general indulgence. Nor was it in the pulpit only that he acted the politician. He was one of those, as we are told in the Biographical Dictionary, who thought the decision of Parliament on the Middlesex election a violation of the rights of the people; and when the counties began, in 1779, to associate for parliamentary reform, he took an active part in assisting their deliberations, and wrote several patriotic manifestos. In the same year appeared his Ode to the Naval Officers of Great Britain, on the trial of Admiral Keppel, in which the poetry is strangled by the politics. His harp was in better tune, when, in 1782, an Ode to Mr. Pitt de-

clared the hopes he had conceived of the son of Chatham; for, like many others, who espoused the cause of freedom, he had ranged himself among the partisans of the youthful statesman, who was then doing all he could to persuade others, as he had no doubt persuaded himself, that he was one of the number.

In the mean time Gray, who, if he had lived longer, might, perhaps, have restrained him from mixing in this turmoil, was no more. The office which he performed of biographer, or rather of editor, for his deceased friend, has given us one of the most delightful books in its kind that our language can boast. It is just that this acknowledgment should be made to Mason, although Mr. Mathias has recently added many others of Gray's most valuable papers, which his former editor was scarcely scholar enough to estimate as they deserved; and Mr. Mitford has shewn us, that some omissions, and perhaps some alterations, were unnecessarily made by him in the letters themselves. As to the task which the latter of these gentlemen imposed on himself, few will think that every passage which he has admitted, though there be nothing in any to detract from the real worth of Gray, could have been made public consistently with those sacred feelings of regard for his memory, by which the mind of Mason was impressed, and that reluctance which he must have had to conquer, before he resolved on the publication at all. The following

extract from a letter, written by the Rev. Edward Jones, brings us into the presence of Mason, and almost to an acquaintance with his thoughts at this time, and on this occasion. "Being at York in September 1771," (Gray died on the thirtieth of July preceding), "I was introduced to Mr. Mason, then in residence. On my first visit, he was sitting in an attitude of much attention to a drawing, pinned up near the fire-place; and another gentleman, whom I afterwards found to be a Mr. Varlet, a miniature painter, who has since settled at Bath, had evidently been in conversation with him about it. My friend begged leave to ask *whom* it was intended to represent. Mr. Mason hesitated, and looked earnestly at Mr. Varlet. I could not resist (though I instantly felt a wish to have been silent) saying, surely from the strong likeness it must be the late Mr. Gray. Mr. Mason at once certainly forgave the intrusion, by asking my opinion as to his fears of having caricatured his poor friend. The features were certainly softened down, previously to the engraving."*—*Nichols's Literary Anecdotes*, vol. ix. p. 718.

* It is said, that the best likeness of Gray is to be found in the figure of Scipio, in an engraving for the edition of Gil Blas, printed at Amsterdam, 1735, vol. iv. p. 94.—See Mr. Mitford's Gray, vol. i. lxxxi. A copy of this figure would be acceptable to many of Gray's admirers.

In the next year, 1772, appeared the first book of the English Garden. The other three followed separately in 1777, 1779, and 1782. The very title of this poem was enough to induce a suspicion, that the art which it taught (if art it can be called) was not founded on general and permanent principles. It was rather a mode which the taste of the time and country had rendered prevalent, and which the love of novelty is already supplanting. In the neighbourhood of those buildings which man constructs for use or magnificence, there is no reason why he should prefer irregularity to order, or dispose his paths in curved lines, rather than in straight. Homer, when he describes the cavern of Calypso, covers it with a vine, and scatters the alder, the poplar, and the cypress, without any symmetry about it; but near the palace of Alcinous he lays out the garden by the rule and compass. Our first parents in Paradise, are placed by Milton amidst

A happy rural seat of various view;

but let the same poet represent himself in his pensive or his cheerful moods, and he is at one time walking "by hedge-row elms on hillocks green;" and at another, "in trim gardens." When we are willing to escape from the tedium of uniformity, nature and accident supply numberless varieties, which we shall for the most part vainly strive to heighten and im-

prove. It is too much to say, that we will use the face of the country as the painter does his canvas;

> Take thy plastic spade,
> It is thy pencil; take thy seeds, thy plants,
> They are thy colours.

The analogy can scarcely hold farther than in a parterre; and even there very imperfectly. Mason could not bear to see his own system pushed to that excess into which it naturally led; and bitterly resented the attempts made by the advocates of the picturesque, to introduce into his landscapes more factitious wildness than he intended.

In 1783 he published a Translation from the Latin of Du Fresnoy's Art of Painting, in which the precepts are more capable of being reduced to practice. He had undertaken the task when young, partly as an exercise in versification, and partly to fix on his mind the principles of an art in which he had himself some skill. Sir Joshua Reynolds, having desired to see it, added some notes, and induced him to revise and publish it. The artist found in it the theory of ideal beauty, which had been taught him by Zachary Mudge, from the writings of Plato, and which enabled him to rise above the mere mechanism of his predecessors. That Mason's version surpasses the original, is not saying much in its praise. In some prefatory lines addressed to Rey-

nolds, he has described the character of Dryden with much happiness.

The last poem which he published separately, was a Secular Ode on the Revolution in 1688. It was formal and vapid; but sufficed to shew that time, though it had checked "the lyric rapture," had left him his ardour in the cause of freedom. Like the two leaders of the opposite parties, Pitt and Fox, he hailed with glad voice the dawn of French liberty. It was only for the gifted eye of Burke to foresee the storm that was impending.

At the same time he recommended the cause of the enslaved Negroes from the pulpit. The abolition of the slave trade was one of the few political subjects, the introduction of which seemed to be allowable in that place. In 1788, appeared also his Memoirs of William Whitehead, attached to the posthumous works of that writer; a piece of biography, as little to be compared in interest to the former, as Whitehead himself can be compared to Gray.

His old age glided on in solitude and peace amid his favourite pursuits, at his rectory of Aston, where he had taught his two acres of garden to command the inequalities of "hill and dale," and to combine "use with beauty." The sonnet in which he dedicated his poems to his patron, the Earl of Holdernesse, describes in his best manner the happiness he enjoyed in this retreat. He was not long permitted

to add to his other pleasures the comforts of a connubial life. In 1765 he had married Mary, daughter of William Shermon, Esq., of Kingston-upon-Hull, who in two years left him a widower. Her epitaph is one of those little poems to which we can always return with a melancholy pleasure. I have heard that this lady had so little regard for the art in which her husband excelled, that on his presenting her with a copy of verses, after the wedding was over, she crumpled them up and put them into her pocket unread. When he had entered his seventieth year, Hurd, who had been his first friend, and the faithful monitor of his studies from youth, confined him "to a sonnet once a year, or so;" warning him, that "age, like infancy, should forbear to play with pointed tools." He had more latitude allowed in prose; for in 1795 he published Essays, Historical and Critical, on English Church Music. In the former part of his subject, he is said, by those who have the best means of knowing, to be well informed and accurate; but in the latter to err on the side of a dry simplicity, which, in the present refined state of the art, it would not answer any good purpose to introduce into the music of our churches. In speaking of a wind instrument, which William of Malmsbury seems to describe as being acted on by the vapour arising from hot water, he has unfortunately gone out of his way to ridicule the projected inven-

tion of the steam-boat by Lord Stanhope. The atrocities committed during the fury of the French Revolution had so entirely cured him of his predilection for the popular part of our Government, that he could not resist the opportunity, however ill-timed, of casting a slur on this nobleman, who was accused of being over-partial to it. In the third Essay, on Parochial Psalmody, he gives the preference to Merrick's weak and affected version over the two other translations that are used in our churches. The late Bishop Horsley, in his Commentary on the Psalms, was, I believe, the first who was hardy enough to claim that palm for Sternhold, to which, with all its awkwardness, his rude vigour entitles him.

When he comes to speak of *Christianizing* our hymns, the apprehension which he expresses of deviating from the present practice of our establishment, seems to have restrained him from saying something which he would otherwise have said. The question surely is not so much, what the practice of our present establishment is, as what that of the first Christians was. There is, perhaps, no alteration in our service that could be made with better effect than this, provided it were made with as great caution as its importance demands.

His death, which was at last sudden, was caused by a hurt on his shin, that happened when he was

stepping out of his carriage. On the Sunday (two days after) he felt so little inconvenience from the accident, as to officiate in his church at Aston. But on the next Wednesday, the 7th of April, 1797, a rapid mortification brought him to his grave. His monument, of which Bacon was the sculptor, is placed in Westminster Abbey, near that of Gray, with the following inscription :—

Optimo Viro
Gulielmo Mason, A.M.
Poetæ,
Si quis alius
Culto, Casto, Pio
Sacrum.
Ob. 7. Apr. 1797.
Æt. 72.

Mason is reported to have been ugly in his person. His portrait by Reynolds gives to features, ill-formed and gross, an expression of intelligence and benignity. In the latter part of life, his character appears to have undergone a greater change, from its primitive openness and good nature, than mere time and experience of the world should have wrought in it. Perhaps this was nothing more than a slight perversion which he had contracted in the school of Warburton. What was a coarse arrogance in the master himself, assumed the form of nicety and superciliousness in the less confident and better regulated tempers of

Mason and Hurd. His harmless vanity cleaved to him longer. As a proof of this, it is related that, several years after the publication of Isis, when he was travelling through Oxford, and happened to pass over Magdalen Bridge at a late hour of the evening, he turned round to a friend who was riding with him, and remarked that it was luckily grown dusk, for they should enter the University unobserved. When his friend, with some surprise inquired into the reason of this caution: What, (said he) do you not remember my Isis?

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This is grief, seeking to relieve and forget itself in fiction and fancy; the other, though the occasion required an expression of deeper sorrow, is a mere pomp of feeling.

His blank verse in the English Garden has not the majesty of Akenside, the sweetness of Dyer, or the terseness of Armstrong. Its characteristic is delicacy; but it is a delicacy approaching nearer to weakness than to grace. It has more resemblance to the rill that trickles over its fretted channel, than to the stream that winds with a full tide, and "warbles as it flows." The practice of cutting it into dialogue had perhaps crippled him. As he has made the characters in his plays too attentive to the decorations of the scene-painter, so in the last book of the English Garden he has turned his landscape into a theatre, for the representation of a play. The story of Nerina is too long and too complicated for an episode in a didactic poem. He will seldom bear to be confronted with those writers whom he is found either by accident or design to resemble. His picture of the callow young in a bird's-nest is, I think, with some alteration, copied from Statius.

——— Her young meanwhile
Callow and cold, from their moss-woven nest
Peep forth; they stretch their little eager throats
Broad to the wind, and plead to the lone spray
Their famish'd plaint importunately shrill.

(*English Garden*, b. 3.)

—— Volucrum sic turba recentum,
Cum reducem longo prospexit in æthere matrem,
Ire cupit contra, summâque e margine nidi
Extat hians; jam jamque cadat ni pectore toto
Obstet aperta parens et amantibus increpet alis.
(*Theb.* lib. x. 458.)

Oppian's imitation of this is happier.

Ὡς δ' ὁπότ' ἀπτήνέσσι φέρει βόσιν ὀρταλίχοισι
Μήτηρ, εἰαρινὴ Ζεφύρου πρωτάγγελος ὄρνις,
Οἱ δ' ἀπαλὸν τρύζοντες ἐπιθρώσκουσι καλιῇ,
Γηθόσυνοι περὶ μητρὶ, καὶ ἱμείροντες ἐδωδῆς
Χείλος ἀναπτύσσουσιν· ἅπαν δ' ἐπὶ δῶμα λέληκεν
Ἀνδρὸς ξεινοδόχοιο λίγα κλάζουσι νεοσσοῖς.
(Halieut. l. iii. 248.)

Hurd, in the letter he addressed to him on the Marks of Imitation, observed, that the imagery with which the Ode to Memory opens, is borrowed from Strada's Prolusions. The chorus in Elfrida, beginning

Hail to thy living light,
Ambrosial morn! all hail thy roseate ray:

is taken from the Hymnus in Auroram, by Flaminio.

His Sappho, a lyrical drama, is one of the few attempts that have been made to bring amongst us that tuneful trifle, the modern Opera of the Italians.

It has been transferred by Mr. Mathias into that language, to which alone it seemed properly to belong. Mr. Glasse has done as much for Caractacus by giving it up to the Greek. Of the two Odes, which are all, excepting some few fragments, that remain to us of the Lesbian poetess, he has introduced Translations into his drama. There is more glitter of phrase than in the versions made, if I recollect right, by Ambrose Phillips, which are inserted in the Spectator, No. 222 and 229; but much less of that passionate emotion which marks the original. Most of my readers will remember that which begins,

> Blest as the immortal Gods is he,
> The youth who fondly sits by thee,
> And hears and sees thee, all the while,
> Softly speak and sweetly smile.

It is thus rendered by Mason:

> The youth that gazes on thy charms,
> Rivals in bliss the Gods on high,
> Whose ear thy pleasing converse warms,
> Thy lovely smile his eye.
>
> But trembling awe my bosom heaves,
> When placed those heavenly charms among;
> The sight my voice of power bereaves,
> And chains my torpid tongue.

Through every thrilling fibre flies
The subtle flame; in dimness drear
My eyes are veil'd; a murmuring noise
Glides tinkling through my ear;

Death's chilly dew my limbs o'erspreads,
Shiv'ring, convuls'd, I panting lye;
And pale, as is the flower that fades,
I droop, I faint, I die.

The rudest language, in which there was anything of natural feeling, would be preferable to this cold splendour. In the other ode, he comes into contrast with Akenside.

But lo! to Sappho's melting airs
Descends the radiant queen of love;
She smiles, and asks what fonder cares
Her suppliant's plaintive measures move.
Why is my faithful maid distrest?
Who, Sappho, wounds thy tender breast?
Say, flies he? soon he shall pursue:
Shuns he thy gifts? he soon shall give:
Slights he thy sorrows? he shall grieve,
And soon to all thy wishes bow.

Akenside, b. 1, Ode 18.

This, though not unexceptionable, and particularly in the last verse, has yet a tenderness and spirit utterly wanting in Mason.

What from my power would Sappho claim?
Who scorns thy flame?

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Of eagerness to obtain poetical distinction he had much more than Gray; but in tact, judgment, and learning, was exceedingly his inferior. He was altogether a man of talent, if I may be allowed to use the word talent according to the sense it bore in our old English; for he had a vehement *desire* of excellence, but wanted either the depth of mind or the industry that was necessary for producing anything that was very excellent.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

Oliver, the second son of Charles and Anne Goldsmith, was born in Ireland, on the 10th of November, 1728, at Pallas, in the Parish of Forgany or Forney in the County of Longford. By a mistake made in the note of his entrance in the college register, he is represented to have been a native of the county of Westmeath.

His father, who had before resided at Smith-hill in the county of Roscommon, (which has by some been erroneously said to be the birth-place of his son, Oliver,) removed thence to Pallas, and afterwards to his Rectory of Kilkenny West, in the county of Westmeath; and in the latter of these parishes, at

Lissoy, or Auburn, he built the house described as the Village-Preacher's modest mansion in the Deserted Village. His mother was daughter of the Rev. Oliver Jones, master of the diocesan school at Elphin. Their family consisted of five sons and three daughters.

In a letter from his elder sister, Catherine, the wife of Daniel Hodson, Esq. inserted in the Life of Goldsmith, which an anonymous writer, whom I suppose to have been Cowper's friend, Mr. Rose, from a passage in Mr. Nichol's Literary Anecdotes, prefixed to his Miscellaneous Works, wonders are told of his early predilection for the poetical art; but those who have observed the amplification with which the sprightly sallies of childhood are related by domestic fondness, will listen to such narrations with some abatement of confidence. It seems probable, that a desire of literary distinction might have been infused into his youthful mind by hearing of the reputation of his countryman, Parnell, with whom, as we learn from his life of that poet, his father and uncle were acquainted.

He received the first rudiments of learning from a school-master who taught in the village where his parents resided, and who had served as a quarter-master during the war of the Succession in Spain; and from the romantic accounts which this man delighted to give of his travels, Goldsmith is sup-

posed, by his sister, to have contracted his propensity for a wandering life. From hence he was removed successively to the school at Elphin, of which the Rev. Mr. Griffin was master, and to that of Athlone; kept by the Rev. Mr. Campbell; and lastly, was placed under the care of the Rev. Patrick Hughes, of Edgeworthstown, in the county of Longford, to whose instruction he acknowledged himself to have been more indebted than to that of his other teachers.

It was probably that untowardness in his outward appearance, which never afterwards left him, that made his schoolfellows consider him a dull boy, fit only to be the butt of their ridicule.

On his last return after the holidays to the house of his master, an adventure befel him, which afterwards was made the ground-work of the plot in one of his comedies. Journeying along leisurely, and being inclined to enjoy such diversion as a guinea, that had been given him for pocket-money, would afford him on the road, he was overtaken by night at a small town called Ardagh. Here, inquiring for the best house in the place, he was directed to a gentleman's habitation that literally answered that description. Under a delusion, the opposite to that entertained by the knight of La Mancha, he rides up to the supposed inn; and having given his horse in charge to the ostler, enters without ceremony.

The master of the house, aware of the mistake, resolves to favour it; and is still less inclined to undeceive his guest, when he finds out from his discourse that he is the son of an acquaintance and a neighbour. A good supper and a bottle or two of wine are called for, of which the host, with his wife and daughter, are invited to partake; and a hot cake is providently ordered for the morrow's breakfast. The young traveller's surprise may be conceived, when in calling for his bill, he finds under what roof he has been lodged, and with whom he had been putting himself on such terms of familiarity.

In June, 1745, he was sent a sizer to Trinity College, Dublin, and placed under the tuition of Mr. Wilder, one of the fellows, who is represented to have been of a temper so morose as to excite the strongest disgust in the mind of his pupil. He did not pass through his academical course without distinction. Dr. Kearney (who was afterwards provost), in a note on Boswell's Life of Johnson, informs us, that Goldsmith gained a premium at the Christmas examination, which, according to Mr. Malone, is more honourable than those obtained at the other examinations, inasmuch as it is the only one that determines the successful candidate to be the first in literary merit. This is enough to disprove what Johnson is reported to have said of him, that he was a plant that

flowered late; that there appeared nothing remarkable about him when he was young; though when he had got into fame, one of his friends began to recollect something of his being distinguished at college. Whether he took a degree is not known.* On one occasion he narrowly escaped expulsion for having been concerned in the rescue of a student, who, in violation of the supposed privileges of the University had been arrested for debt within its precincts: but his superiors contented themselves with passing a public censure on him.

Having been deprived, in 1747, by death, of his father, who had with difficulty supported him at college, he became a dependant on the bounty of his uncle,† the Rev. Thomas Contarine; and after fluctuating in his choice of an employment in life, was at length established as a medical student at Edinburgh, in his twenty-fifth year.

Dr. Strean mentions, that he was at one time intended for the church, but that appearing before the Bishop, when he went to be examined for orders, in a pair of scarlet breeches, he was rejected.

From Edinburgh, when he had completed his

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* He took the degree of Bachelor of Arts, Feb. 27, 1749. *Prior's Life of Goldsmith*, vol. i. p. 98. ED.

† He also helped himself by writing street-ballads. *Prior*, vol. i. p. 75. ED.

attendance on the usual course of lectures, he removed to Leyden, with the intention of continuing his studies a that University.

Johnson used to speak with coarse contempt of Goldsmith's want of veracity. "Noll," said he to a lady of much distinction in literature, who repeated to me his words, "Noll, madam, would lie through an inch board." In this instance, Johnson's known partiality to Goldsmith fixes the stigma so deeply, that we can place no reliance on the account he gave of what befel him, when he imagined himself to be no longer within reach of detection. In a letter to his uncle he relates that, before going to Holland, he had embarked in a vessel for Bordeaux, that the ship was driven by a storm into Newcastle-upon-Tyne, that he was there seized on suspicion of being engaged with the rebels, and thrown into prison; that the vessel, meanwhile proceeding on her voyage, was wrecked at the mouth of the Garonne, where all the crew perished; and that, at the end of a fortnight, being liberated, he set sail in a vessel bound for Holland, and in nine days arrived safely at Rotterdam. After a residence of about a twelvemonth at Leyden, he was involved in difficulties, occasioned by his love of gambling, a ridiculous inclination that adhered to him for the remainder of his life. He now set out with the resolution of

visiting the principal parts of the Continent on foot; and, according to his own report of himself, made his way by a variety of stratagems, sometimes recruiting his finances by the acquisition of small sums proposed in the foreign universities to public disputants; at others, securing himself a hospitable reception by the exercise of a moderate share of skill in playing the flute—his "tuneless pipe," as he calls it, in that passage of The Traveller, where he alludes to this method of supplying his wants.

Thus, if we are to believe him, he passed hrough the Netherlands, France, and Germany, into the Swiss Cantons; and in that country, so well suited to awaken the feelings of a poet, he composed a part of The Traveller, and sent it to his elder brother, a clergyman in Ireland. Continuing his journey into Italy, he visited Venice, Verona, Florence, and Padua; and having spent six months at the University in the last mentioned city, returned through France to England in 1756. From his Inquiry into the Present State of Learning, we collect, that when at Paris he attended the Chemical Lectures of Rouelle.

In the meantime his uncle had died; and he found himself, on his arrival in London, so destitute even of a friend to whom he could refer for a recommendation, that he with difficulty obtained first the place of an usher to a school, and afterwards that of

assistant in the laboratory of a chemist. At last, meeting with Doctor Sleigh, formerly his fellow-student at Edinburgh, he was enabled, by the kindness of this worthy physician, who appears in so amiable a light as the patron of Barry, in the Memoirs of that painter, to avail himself more effectually of his knowledge in medicine, and to earn a subsistence, however scanty, by the practice of that art.

The Bankside in Southwark, and the Temple, or its vicinity, were successively the places where he fixed his residence. To his professional gains he soon added the emoluments arising from his exertions as an author. In 1758, he took a share in the conduct of the literary journal called the Monthly Review: and for the space of seven or eight months, while the employment lasted, lodged in the house of Mr. Griffiths, the proprietor of it. The next year he contributed several papers to the Lady's Magazine, and to the Bee, a collection of essays, and published his Inquiry into the Present State of Polite Learning, in which he speaks of the Monthly Review in terms not very respectful. There is, I doubt, in this little essay more display than reality of erudition. It would not be easy to say where he had discovered "that Dante was persecuted by the critics as long as he lived." The complaints he made of the hard fate of authors, and his censure of odes and of blank verse, were well calculated to conciliate the good will,

and to excite the sympathy of Johnson, with whom he soon became intimate.

Poverty and indiscretion were other claims, by which the benevolent commiseration of Johnson could scarcely fail to be awakened; and his acquaintance with Goldsmith had not subsisted long, when an occasion presented itself for rescuing him from the consequences of those evils. One day, calling on our poet, at his lodgings in Wine-office Court, Fleet-street, he found him under arrest for debt, and engaged in violent altercation with his landlady. Taking from him the Vicar of Wakefield, then just written, Johnson proceeded with it to Newbery the Bookseller, from whom he obtained sixty pounds for his friend; and Goldsmith's good humour, and the complaisance of his hostess, returning with this accession of wealth, they spent the remainder of the day together in harmony. In this novel, like Fielding and Smollett, he exhibits a very natural view of familiar life. Inferior to the first in the artful management of his story, and to the latter in the broader traits of comic character, and not equal to either in variety and fertility, he is, nevertheless, to be preferred to both for his power of passing from the ludicrous to the tender, and for his regard to moral decency. It was not printed till some years after, in 1766, when his reputation had been in some degree established by The Traveller. Meanwhile he pub-

lished, in a periodical work called the Ledger, his Letters from a Citizen of the World to his Friend in the East, in which, under the character of a Chinese philosopher, he describes the customs and manners of Europeans. But this assumed personage is an awkward concealment for the good-humoured Irishman, with his never-failing succession of droll stories. Of these there are too many; and the want of any thing like a continued interest is sensibly felt. I do not know of any book, on the same plan, that is to be compared with the Persian Letters of Montesquieu.

In the spring of 1763 he had lodgings in Islington, and continuing there till the following year, he revised several petty publications for Newbery, and wrote the Letters on English History, which, from their being published as the letters of a nobleman to his son, have been attributed by turns to the Earl of Orrery and Lord Lyttelton.

His next removal was to the Temple, where he remained for the rest of his life, not without indulging a project, equally magnificent and visionary, of making a journey into the East, in order to bring back with him such useful inventions as had not found their way into Britain. He was ridiculed by Johnson, for fancying himself competent to so arduous a task, when he was utterly unacquainted with our own mechanical arts. He would have brought back a grinding barrow, said Johnson, and thought that he had furnished a wonderful improvement. The

more feasible plan of returning with honour and advantage to his native country, was held out to him through the patronage of the Earl of Northumberland. That nobleman, who was then the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, sent for him, and made him an offer of his protection. Goldsmith, with his characteristic simplicity, replied, that he had a brother there, a clergyman, who stood in need of help; that, for himself, he looked to the booksellers for support. This reliance happily did not deceive him. By the rewards of his literary labours, he was placed in a comparative state of opulence, in which his propensity for play alone occasioned a diminution.

In 1765, appeared The Hermit, The Traveller, and the Essays.

About this time a club was formed, at the proposal of Reynolds, which consisted, besides that eminent painter and our poet, of Johnson, Burke, Burke's father-in-law, Doctor Nugent, Sir John Hawkins, Langton, Beauclerk, and Chamier, who met and supped together every Friday night, at the Turk's Head, in Gerard-street, Soho. The bookseller's shop belonging to Dr. Griffiths, called the Dunciad, in the neighbourhood of Catherine-street, was another of his favourite haunts.

His comedy of the Good Natured Man, though it had received the sanction of Burke's approval, did not please Garrick sufficiently to induce him to venture it on his theatre. It was, therefore, brought

forward by Colman, at Covent Garden, on the 29th of January, 1769; but having been represented for nine nights, did not longer maintain its place on the stage, though it is one of those comedies which afford most amusement in the closet. For his conception of the character of Croaker, the author acknowledged that he was indebted to Johnson's Suspirius, in the Rambler. That of Honeywood, in its undistinguishing benevolence, bears some resemblance to his own.

In the next year he published his Deserted Village; and entered into an agreement with Davies, to compile a History of England, in four octavo volumes, for the sum of five hundred pounds in the space of two years; before the expiration of which period, he made a compact with the same bookseller for an abridgment of the Roman History, which he had before published. The History of Greece, which has appeared since his death, cannot with certainty be ascribed to his pen.

In 1771, he wrote the Life of Bolingbroke, prefixed to the Dissertation on Parties.

The reception which his former play had met did not discourage him from trying his fate with a second. But it was not till after much solicitation that Colman was prevailed on to allow The Mistakes of a Night, or She Stoops to Conquer, to be acted at Covent Garden, on the 15th of March, 1773. A large party of zealous friends, with Johnson at their head, attended to witness the representation and to

lead the plaudits of the house; a scheme which Mr. Cumberland describes to have been preconcerted with much method, but to have been near failing in consequence of some mistakes in the execution of the manœuvres, which aroused the displeasure of the audience. That the piece is enlivened by such droll incidents, as to be nearly allied to farce, Johnson with justice observed, declaring, however, that "he knew of no comedy for many years that had so much exhilarated an audience; that had so much answered the great end of comedy, that of making an audience merry."

The History of the Earth and Animated Nature, in eight volumes, closed the labours of Goldsmith. This compilation, however recommended by the agreeableness of style usual to its author, is but little prized for its accuracy. In a summary of past events, which are often differently related by writers of authority and credit nearly equal, it is in vain to look for certainty. But when we are presented with a description of natural objects that required only to be looked at in order to be known, we are neither amused nor instructed without some degree of precision. History partakes of the nature of romance. Physiology is more closely connected with science. In the one we must often rest contented with probability. In the other we know that truth is generally to be attained, and therefore expect to find it.

Goldsmith had been for some time subject to

attacks of strangury; and having before experienced relief from James's powders, had again recourse to that popular medicine. His medical attendants are said to have remonstrated with him on its unfitness in the stage to which his disorder had reached; but he persevered; and his fever increasing, and some secret distress of mind, under which he owned to Dr. Turton that he laboured, aggravating his bodily complaint, he expired on the 4th of April in his forty-fifth year.

He was privately interred in the Temple burying ground. A monument is erected to his memory in Westminster Abbey, with the following epitaph by Johnson, written at the solicitation of their common friends.

Olivarii Goldsmith,
Poetæ, Physici, Historici,
Qui nullum fere scribendi genus
Non tetigit,
Nullum quod tetigit non ornavit:
Seu risus essent movendi,
Sive lacrymæ,
Affectuum potens at lenis dominator:
Ingenio sublimis, vividus, versatilis,
Oratione grandis, nitidus, venustus:
Hoc monumento memoriam coluit
Sodalium amor,
Amicorum fides,
Lectorum veneratio.
Natus in Hiberniâ, Forniæ Longfordiensis,
In loco cui nomen Pallas.
Nov. XXIX, MDCCXXXI.
Eblanæ literis institutus;
Obiit Londini,
April. IV. MDCCLXXIV.

It has been questioned whether there is any authority for using the word "tetigit" as it is here employed. I have heard it observed by one, whose opinion on such subjects is decisive, that "contigit" would have better expressed the writer's meaning.

Another epitaph composed by Johnson in Greek, deserves notice, as it shows how strongly his mind was impressed by Goldsmith's abilities.

Τὸν τάφον εἰσοράας τὸν Ολιβάριοιο, κονίην
Ἄφροσι μὴ σέμνην, ξεῖνε, πόδεσσι πάτει·
Οἵσι μέμηλε φύσις, μέτρων χάρις, ἔργα παλαιῶν,
Κλαίετε ποιήτην, ἱστόρικον, φύσικον.

"Thou beholdest the tomb of Oliver; press not, O stranger, with the foot of folly, the venerable dust. Ye who care for nature, for the charms of song, for the deeds of ancient days, weep for the Historian, the Naturalist, the Poet."

Goldsmith's stature was below the middle height; his limbs, sturdy; his forehead, more prominent than is usual; and his face, almost round, pallid, and marked with the small-pox.

The simpleness, almost approaching to fatuity, of his outward deportment, combined with the power which there was within, brings to our recollection some part of the character of La Fontaine, whom a French lady wittily called the Fable Tree, from his apparent unconsciousness, or rather want of mental responsibility for the admirable productions which

he was continually supplying. His propriety and clearness, when he expresses his thoughts with his pen, and his confusion and inability to impart them in conversation, well illustrated the observation of Cicero, that it is very possible for a man to think rightly on any subject, and yet to want the power of conveying his sentiments by speech in fit and becoming language to others. "Fieri potest ut recte quis sentiat, sed id quod sentit polite eloqui non possit." Yet Mr. Cumberland, who was one of his associates, has informed us, "that he had gleams of eloquence."

Johnson said of him that he was not a social man; he never exchanged mind with you. His prevailing foible was a desire of shining in those exterior accomplishments which nature had denied him. Vanity and benevolence had conspired to make him an easy prey to adulation and imposture.

His complaints of the envy by which he found his mind tormented, and especially on the occasion of Johnson's being honoured by an interview with the king, must have made those who heard him, lose all sense of the evil passion, in their amusement at a confession so novel and so pleasant.

One day, we are told, he complained in a mixed company of Lord Camden. "I met him," said he, "at Lord Clare's house in the country, and he took no more notice of me than if I had been an

ordinary man." The story of his peach-coloured coat will not soon be forgotten. If—

——— in some men
Their graces serve them but as enemies,

Goldsmith was one of those in whom their frailties are more likely to serve them as friends; for they were such as could scarcely fail to assist in appeasing malevolence and conciliating kindness. Be this as it will, he must, with all his weaknesses, be considered as one of the chief ornaments of the age in which he lived.

Comparisons have been made between the situation of the men eminent for literature in Queen Anne's time and at the commencement of the reign of George the Third. In the former, beginning to be disengaged from the court, where they were more at home during the reign of the Charleses, they were falling under the influence of the nobility, amongst whom they generally found their patrons, and often their associates. In the latter, they had been insensibly shaken off alike by the court and the nobles, and were come into the hands of the people and the booksellers. I know not whether they were much the worse for this change. If in the one instance they were rendered more studious of elegance and smartness; in the other, they attained more freedom and force. In the former, they were oftener imitators of the French. In the latter, they followed the dictates

of a better sense, and trusted more to their own resources. They lost, indeed, the character of wits, but they aspired to that of instructors. Yet in one respect, and that a material one, it must be owned, that they were sufferers by this alteration in affairs. For the quantity of their labours having become more important under their new masters than it was under their old ones, they had less care of selection, and their originality was weakened by diffusiveness. They indulged themselves but sparingly in the luxury of composing verse, which was too thriftless an occupation to be continued long. They used it, perhaps, as the means of attracting notice to themselves at their first entrance on the world, but not as the staple on which they were afterwards to depend. When the song had drawn a band of hearers around them, it had done its duty. The crowd was to be detained and increased, by expectations of advantage rather than of pleasure. A writer consulted Goldsmith on what subjects he might employ his pen with most profit to himself. "It will be better," said the author of The Traveller and the Deserted Village, laughing indeed, but in good earnest, "to relinquish the draggle-tail muses. For my part, I have found productions in prose more sought after and better paid for." This is, no doubt, the reason that his verse bears so small a proportion to his other writings. Yet it is by the former, added to

the few works of imagination which he has left besides, that he will be known to posterity. His histories will probably be superseded by more skilful or more accurate compilations; as they are now read by few who can obtain information nearer to its original sources.

In the natural manner of telling a short and humorous story, he is perhaps surpassed by no writer of prose except Addison. In his Essays, the style preserves a middle way between the gravity of Johnson and the lightness of Chesterfield; but it may often be objected to them, as to the moral writings of Johnson, that they present life to us under a gloomy aspect, and leave an impression of despondence on the mind of the reader.

In his poetry there is nothing ideal. It pleases chiefly by an exhibition of nature in her most homely and familiar views. But from these he selects his objects with due discretion, and omits to represent whatever would occasion unmingled pain or disgust.

His couplets have the same slow and stately march as Johnson's; and if we can suppose similar images of rural and domestic life to have arrested the attention of that writer, we can scarcely conceive that he would have expressed them in different language.

Some of the lines in The Deserted Village are said to be closely copied from a poem by Welsted, called

the Οἰκογραφία; but I do not think he will be found to have levied larger contributions on it, than most poets have supposed themselves justified in making on the neglected works of their predecessors.

The following particulars relating to this poem, which I have extracted from the letter of Dr. Strean before referred to, cannot fail to gratify that numerous class of readers with whom it has been a favourite from their earliest years.

The poem of The Deserted Village took its origin from the circumstance of General Robert Napper (the grandfather of the gentleman who now lives in the house within half a mile of Lissoy, and built by the General), having purchased an extensive tract of the country surrounding Lissoy, or *Auburn;* in consequence of which, many families, here called *cottiers*, were removed to make room for the intended improvements of what was now to become the wide domain of a rich man, warm with the idea of changing the face of his new acquisition; and were forced "*with fainting steps*," to go in search of "*torrid tracts*" and "*distant climes.*"

This fact alone might be sufficient to establish the seat of the poem; but there cannot remain a doubt in any unprejudiced mind, when the following are added; viz. that the character of the village-preacher, the above-named Henry, (the brother of the poet,) is copied from nature. He is described exactly as he lived; and his "modest mansion" as it existed. Burn, the name

of the village-master, and the site of his school-house, and *Catherine Giraghty*, a lonely widow;

The wretched matron forced in age for bread
To strip the brook with mantling cresses spread;

(and to this day the brook and ditches, near the spot where her cabin stood, abound with cresses) still remain in the memory of the inhabitants, and *Catherine's* children live in the neighbourhood. The pool, the busy mill, the house where "*nut-brown draughts inspired*," are still visited as the poetic scene; and the "*hawthorn-bush*" growing in an open space in front of the house, which I knew to have three trunks, is now reduced to one; the other two having been cut, from time to time, by persons carrying away pieces of it to be made into toys, &c. in honour of the bard, and of the celebrity of his poem. All these contribute to the same proof; and the "*decent church*," which I attended for upwards of eighteen years, and which "*tops the neighbouring hill*," is exactly described as seen from Lissoy, the residence of the preacher.

I should have observed, that Elizabeth Delap, who was a parishioner of mine, and died at the age of about ninety, often told me she was the first who put a book into Goldsmith's hand; by which she meant, that she taught him his letters: she was allied to him, and kept a little school.

The Hermit is a pleasing little tale, told with that simplicity which appears so easy, and is in fact so difficult, to be obtained. It was imitated in the

Ballad of a Friar of Orders Grey, in Percy's Reliques of English Poetry.

His Traveller was, it is said, pronounced by Mr. Fox to be one of the finest pieces in the English language. Perhaps this sentence was delivered by that great man with some qualification, which was either forgotten or omitted by the reporter of it; otherwise such praise was surely disproportioned to its object.

In this poem, he professes to compare the good and evil which fall to the share of those different nations whose lot he contemplates. His design at setting out is to shew that, whether we consider the blessings to be derived from art or from nature, we shall discover "an equal portion dealt to all mankind." And the conclusion which he draws at the end of the poem would be perfectly just, if these premises were allowed him.

In every government though terrors reign,
Though tyrant kings or tyrant laws restrain,
How small, of all that human hearts endure,
That part which laws or kings can cause or cure!
Still to ourselves in every place consign'd,
Our own felicity we make or find:
With secret course, which no loud streams annoy,
Glides the smooth current of domestic joy.
The lifted axe, the agonizing wheel,
Luke's iron crown, and Damien's bed of steel,
To men remote from power but rarely known,
Leave reason, faith, and conscience, all our own.

That it matters little or nothing to the happiness of men whether they are governed well or ill, whether they live under fixed and known laws, or at the will of an arbitrary tyrant, is a paradox, the fallacy of which is happily too apparent to need any refutation. Nor is his inference warranted by those particular observations which he makes for the purpose of establishing it. When of Italy he tells us, "that sensual bliss is all this nation knows," how is Italy to be compared either with itself when it was prompted by those "noble aims," of which he speaks, or with that country where he sees

> The lords of human kind pass by,
> Intent on high designs, a thoughtful band,
> By forms unfashion'd, fresh from nature's hand,
> Fierce in their native hardiness of soul,
> True to imagined right, above controul;
> While e'en the peasant learns these rights to scan,
> And learns to venerate himself as man?

That good is every where balanced by some evil, none will deny. But that no effort of human courage or prudence can make one scale preponderate over the other, and that a decree of fate has fixed them in eternal equipoise, is an opinion which, if it were seriously entertained, must bind men to a tame and spiritless acquiescence in whatever disadvantages or inconveniences they may chance to find themselves involved, and leave to them the exercise of no other public virtue than that of a blind submission.

His poetry is happily better than his argument. He discriminates with much skill the manners of the several countries that pass in review before him; the illustrations, with which he relieves and varies his main subject, are judiciously interspersed; and as he never raises his tone too far beyond his pitch at the first starting, so he seldom sinks much below it. The thought at the beginning appears to have pleased him; for he has repeated it in "the Citizen of the World:"

> Where'er I roam, whatever realms to see,
> My heart untravel'd fondly turns to thee;
> Still to my brother turns with ceaseless pain,
> And drags at each remove a lengthening chain.

"The further I travel, I feel the pain of separation with stronger force; those ties that bind me to my native country and you are still unbroken. By every remove I only drag a greater length of chain."

To the poetical compositions of Goldsmith, in general, may be applied with justice that temperate commendation which he has given to the works of Parnell in his life of that Poet. "At the end of his course the reader regrets that his way has been so short; he wonders that it gave him so little trouble; and so resolves to go the journey over again." There is much to solace fatigue and even to excite pleasure, but nothing to call forth rapture. We stay to contemplate and enjoy the objects on our

road; but we feel that it is on this earth we have been travelling, and that the author is either not willing or not able to raise us above it. No writer in the English language has combined such various excellences as a novelist, a writer of comedies, and a poet.

ERASMUS DARWIN.

ERASMUS, the seventh child and fourth son of Robert Darwin, Esq. by his wife Elizabeth Hill, was born at Elston, near Newark, in Nottinghamshire, on the 12th of December 1731. He was educated at the Grammar school of Chesterfield, in Derbyshire, under the Rev. Mr. Burrows, and from thence sent to St. John's College, Cambridge, where he had for his tutor Dr. Powell, afterwards Master of the College, to whose learning and goodness, Mason, another of his pupils, has left a testimony in one of his earliest poems.

After proceeding Bachelor in Medicine at Cambridge, Darwin went to Edinburgh, in order to pursue his studies in that science to more advantage. When he had been there long enough to entitle him to the degree of Doctor in Medicine, he quitted Edin-

burgh, and began his practice at Nottingham, but soon after (in 1756) removed to Lichfield. In the following year he married Mary, daughter of Charles Howard, Esq. a proctor in the Ecclesiastical Court of Lichfield. He was very soon distinguished for his professional skill. The first case which he treated with so much success as to attract the public notice, was that of a young man of fortune, who, being in a fever, was given over by his ordinary physician, but whom Darwin restored, probably by one of those bold measures from which others would have shrunk, but to which he wisely had recourse whenever a desperate malady called for a desperate cure. His patient, whose name was Inge, was, I believe, the same whom Johnson, in his life of Ambrose Phillips, has termed a gentleman of great eminence in Staffordshire. Part of the wealth that now flowed in upon him, from an extensive and opulent circle, was employed with that liberality which in this country is perhaps oftener exercised by men of his profession than by those of any other.

At Lichfield, he formed an intimacy with several persons, who afterwards rose to much distinction. Of these, the most remarkable were Mr. Edgeworth, whose skill in mechanics made him acceptable to Darwin; Mr. Day, a man remembered to more advantage by his writings, than by the singularities of his conduct; and Anna Seward, the female most eminent

in her time for poetical genius. The manner in which the first of these introduced himself shall be told in his own words, as they convey a lively description of Darwin's person and habits of life at this time. "I wrote an account to the Doctor of the reception which his scheme" (for preventing accidents to a carriage in turning) "had met with from the Society of Arts. The Doctor wrote me a very civil answer; and though, as I afterwards found out, he took me for a coach-maker, he invited me to his house: an invitation which I accepted in the ensuing summer. When I arrived at Lichfield, I went to inquire whether the Doctor was at home. I was shewn into a room where I found Mrs. Darwin. I told her my name. She said the Doctor expected me, and that he intended to be at home before night. There were books and prints in the room, of which I took occasion to speak. Mrs. Darwin asked me to drink tea, and I perceived that I owed to my literature the pleasure of passing the evening with this most agreeable woman. We talked and conversed upon various literary subjects till it was dark; when Mrs. Darwin seeming to be surprised that the Doctor had not come home, I offered to take my leave; but she told me that I had been expected for some days, and that a bed had been prepared for me: I heard some orders given to the housemaid, who had destined a different room for my reception from that

which her mistress had upon second thoughts appointed. I perceived that the maid examined me attentively, but I could not guess the reason. When supper was nearly finished, a loud rapping at the door announced the Doctor. There was a bustle in the hall, which made Mrs. Darwin get up and go to the door. Upon her exclaiming that they were bringing in a dead man, I went to the hall. I saw some persons, directed by one whom I guessed to be Doctor Darwin, carrying a man who appeared to be motionless. 'He is not dead,' said Doctor Darwin. 'He is only dead drunk. I found him,' continued the Doctor, 'nearly suffocated in a ditch: I had him lifted into my carriage, and brought hither, that we might take care of him to-night.' Candles came; and what was the surprise of the Doctor and of Mrs. Darwin, to find that the person whom he had saved was Mrs. Darwin's brother! who, for the first time in his life, as I was assured, had been intoxicated in this manner, and who would undoubtedly have perished had it not been for Doctor Darwin's humanity. During this scene I had time to survey my new friend, Doctor Darwin. He was a large man, fat, and rather clumsy; but intelligence and benevolence were painted in his countenance: he had a considerable impediment in his speech, a defect which is in general painful to others; but the Doctor repaid his auditors so well for making them wait for his wit

or his knowledge, that he seldom found them impatient. When his brother was disposed of, he came to supper, and I thought that he looked at Mrs. Darwin as if he was somewhat surprised when he heard that I had passed the whole evening in her company. After she withdrew, he entered into conversation with me upon the carriage that I had made, and upon the remarks that fell from some members of the Society to whom I had shewn it. I satisfied his curiosity; and having told him that my carriage was in the town, and that he could see it whenever he pleased, we talked upon mechanical subjects, and afterwards on various branches of knowledge, which necessarily produced allusions to classical literature; by these, he discovered that I had received the education of a gentleman. 'Why! I thought,' said the Doctor, 'that you were a coach-maker!' 'That was the reason,' said I, 'that you looked surprised at finding me at supper with Mrs. Darwin. But you see, Doctor, how superior in discernment ladies are even to the most learned gentlemen: I assure you that I had not been in the room five minutes before Mrs. Darwin asked me to tea!'"

These endeavours to improve the construction of carriages were near costing him dear; nor did he desist till he had been several times thrown down, and at last broke the pan of the right knee, which occasioned a slight but incurable lameness. The

amiable woman, of whom Mr. Edgeworth has here spoken, died in 1770. Of the five children whom she brought him, two were lost in their infancy. Charles, the eldest of the remaining three, died at Edinburgh, in 1778, of a disease supposed to be communicated by a corpse which he was dissecting, when one of his fingers was slightly wounded. He had obtained a gold medal for pointing out a test by which pus might be distinguished from mucus; and the Essay in which he had stated his discovery was published by his father after his death, together with another treatise, which he left incomplete, on the Retrograde Motions of the Absorbent Vessels of Animal Bodies in some Diseases. Another of his sons, Erasmus, who was a lawyer, in a temporary fit of mental derangement put an end to his existence, in 1799. Robert Waring, a physician, now in high reputation at Shrewsbury, is the only one of these children who survived him.

A few years before he quitted Lichfield, in consequence of a second marriage, he attempted to establish a Botanical Society in that city; but his only associates were the present Sir Brooke Boothby, and a proctor whose name was Jackson. Of this triumvirate, Miss Seward, who knew them well, tells us that Jackson admired Sir Brooke Boothby, and worshipped and aped Dr. Darwin. He became a useful drudge to each in their joint work, the translation of

the Linnæan system of vegetation into English from the Latin. His illustrious coadjutors exacted of him fidelity to the sense of their author, and they corrected Jackson's inelegant English, weeding it of its pompous coarseness. Darwin had already conceived the design of turning the Linnæan system into a poem, which, after he had composed it, was long handed about in manuscript; and, I believe, frequently revised and altered with the most sedulous care. The stage on which he has introduced his fancied Queen of Botany, and her attendants from the Rosicrusian world, has the recommendation of being a real spot of ground within a mile of the place he inhabited. A few years ago it retained many traces of the diligence he had bestowed on it, and has probably not yet entirely lost them. Of this work, called the Botanic Garden, which he retained till he thought there was no danger of his medical character suffering from his being known as a poet, he published, in 1789, the second part, containing the Loves of the Plants, first; believing it to be more level to the apprehension of ordinary readers. It soon made its way to an almost universal popularity. With the lovers of poetry, the novelty of the subject, and the high polish, as it was then considered, of the verse, secured it many favourers, and the curiosity of the naturalist was not less gratified by the various information and the fanciful conjec-

tures which abounded in the notes. The first part was given to the public in three years after.

In 1795 and 1796, appeared the two volumes of Zoonomia, or Laws of Organic Life, the produce of long labour and much consideration. What profit a physician may derive from this book I am unable to determine; but I fear that the general reader will too often discover in it a hazardous ingenuity, to which good sense and reason have been sacrificed. When the writer of these pages, who was then his patient, ventured to intimate the sensuality of one part of it to its author, he himself immediately referred to the passage which was likely to have raised the objection; and, on another occasion, as if to counteract this prejudice in the mind of one whose confidence he might be desirous of obtaining, he recommended to him the study of Paley's Moral Philosophy.

In 1781, he married his second wife, the widow of Colonel Pole, of Radburne, near Derby, with whom he appears to have lived as happily as he had done with his first. By her persuasion, he was induced to pass the latter part of his days at Derby. Here his medical practice was not at all lessened; and he had a second family to provide for out of the emolument which it brought him. His other publications were a Tract on Female Education, a slight performance, written for the purpose of recommending

a school kept by some ladies, in whose welfare his relation to them gave him a warm interest; and a long book in 1800, on the Philosophy of Agriculture and Gardening, which he entitled Phytologia.

On Lady Day, 1802, he took possession of an old house, called the Priory, which had belonged to his son Erasmus, and was situated at a short distance from Derby; and on the 17th of the next month, while he was writing to his friend, Mr. Edgeworth, the following letter, he was arrested by the sudden approach of death.

Priory, near Derby, April 17, 1802.

Dear Edgeworth,—I am glad to find that you still amuse yourself with mechanism, in spite of the troubles of Ireland.

The use of turning aside, or downwards, the claw of a table, I don't see, as it must be reared against a wall, for it will not stand alone. If the use be for carriage, the feet may shut up, like the usual brass feet of a reflecting telescope.

We have all been now removed from Derby about a fortnight, to the Priory, and all of us like our change of situation. We have a pleasant home, a good garden, ponds full of fish, and a pleasing valley somewhat like Shenstone's—deep, umbrageous, and with a talkative stream running down it. Our home is near the top of the valley, well screened by hills from the east and north, and open to the south, where at four miles' distance we see Derby Tower.

Four or more strong springs rise near the house, and have formed the valley, which, like that of Petrarch, may be called Valchiusa, as it begins, or is shut at the situation of the house. I hope you like the description, and hope farther, that yourself or any part of your family will sometime do me the pleasure of a visit.

Pray tell the authoress that the water-nymphs of our valley will be happy to assist her next novel.

My bookseller, Mr. Johnson, will not begin to print the Temple of Nature till the price of paper is fixed by Parliament. I suppose the present duty is paid

* * * *

To this imperfect sentence was added on the opposite side by another hand;

Sir,—This family is in the greatest affliction. I am truly grieved to inform you of the death of the invaluable Dr. Darwin. Dr. Darwin got up apparently in good health; about eight o'clock, he rang the library bell. The servant who went, said he appeared fainting. He revived again. Mrs. Darwin was immediately called. The Doctor spoke often, but soon appeared fainting; and died about one o'clock.

Our dear Mrs. Darwin and family are inconsolable: their affliction is great indeed, there being few such husbands or fathers. He will be most deservedly lamented by all who had the honour of being known to him.

I remain, Sir,
Your obedient humble servant,
S. M.

P.S. This letter was begun this morning by Dr. Darwin himself.

The complaint which thus suddenly terminated his life, in his seventy-first year, was the Angina Pectoris.

The Temple of Nature was printed in the year after his death; but the public had either read enough of his writings or were occupied with other things, for little attention was paid to this poetical bequest. That ingenious burlesque of his manner, the Loves of the Triangles, probably contributed to loosen the spell by which he had for a while taken the general ear.

His person is well described by his biographer, Miss Seward, as being above the middle size, his form athletic, and his limbs too heavy for exact proportion; his countenance marked by the traces of a severe small-pox, and, when not animated by social pleasure, rather saturnine than sprightly. In youth his exterior was rendered agreeable by florid health, and a smile that indicated good-humour. His portrait, by Wright of Derby, gives a very exact, but inanimate, representation of his form and features. In justice to the painter, it must be told, that I believe the likeness to have been taken after death.

In his medical practice he was by some accused of empiricism. From this charge, both Miss Seward and Mr. Edgeworth have, I think, justly vindicated him. The former has recorded a project which he suggested, on the supposed authority of some

old practitioners, but which he did not execute, for curing one of his consumptive patients by the transfusing of blood from the veins of a person in health. I have been told, that when a mother, who seemed to be in the paroxysm of a delirium, expressed an earnest wish to take her infant into her arms, and her attendants were fearful of indulging her lest she should do some violence to the object of her affection, he desired them to commit it to her without apprehension, and that the result was an immediate abatement of her disorder. This was an instance rather of strong sagacity than of extraordinary boldness; for nothing less than a well-founded confidence in the safety of the experiment could have induced him to hazard it.

I know not whether it be worth relating, that when sent for to a nobleman, at Buxton, who conceived his health to have suffered by the use of tea, to which he was immoderately addicted, Darwin rang the bell, and ordered a pot of strong green tea to be brought up, and, filling both his patient's cup and his own, encouraged him to frequent and lavish draughts. I have heard that he was impatient of inquiries which related to diet; thinking, I suppose, that after the age of childhood, in ordinary cases, each person might regulate it best for himself. But from an almost entire abstinence from fermented liquors, he was, both by precept and example, a

strenuous adviser. "He believed," says Miss Edgeworth, in her Memoirs of her Father, "that almost all the distempers of the higher classes of people arise from drinking, in some form or other, too much vinous spirit. To this he attributed the aristocratic disease of gout, the jaundice, and all bilious or liver complaints; in short all the family of pain. This opinion he supported in his writings with the force of his eloquence and reason; and still more in conversation, by all those powers of wit, satire, and peculiar humour, which never appeared fully to the public in his works, but which gained him strong ascendancy in private society. During his lifetime, he almost banished wine from the tables of the rich of his acquaintance; and persuaded most of the gentry in his own and the neighbouring counties to become water-drinkers." Here, I doubt, Miss Edgeworth has a little over-rated the extent of his influence. "Partly in jest, and partly in earnest, he expressed his suspicions, and carried his inferences on this subject, to a preposterous excess. When he heard that my father was bilious, he suspected that this must be the consequence of his having, since his residence in Ireland, and in compliance with the fashion of the country, indulged too freely in drinking. His letter, I remember, concluded with—Farewell, my dear friend. God keep you from whiskey—if he can."

His opinion respecting the safety of inoculating for the small-pox at a proper age, as it was expressed in the following letter to the writer of these pages, will be satisfactory to such parents as are yet unconvinced of the efficacy of vaccination; and his opinion is the more valuable, because it was given at a time when there was neither prejudice nor prepossession on the subject.

Derby, Oct. 9, 1797.

Dear Sir,—On the best inquiry I have been able to make to-day, I cannot hear that the small-pox is in Derby. I can only add, that all those who have died by inoculation, whom I have heard of these last twenty years, have been children at the breast; on which account it may be safer to defer inoculation till four or five years old, if there be otherwise no hazard of taking the disease naturally.

I am, &c.

E. DARWIN.

On the accounts which his patients gave him of their own maladies, he placed so little dependence, that he thought it necessary to wring the truth from them as a lawyer would do from an unwilling witness. His general distrust of others, in all that related to themselves, is well exemplified by a casual remark that has been lately repeated to me by a respectable dignitary of the church, to whom when he was apologizing for his want of skill in the game

of chess, at which they were going to play, Darwin answered, that he made it a rule, not to believe either the good or the harm that men spoke of themselves.

This want of reliance in the sincerity of those with whom he conversed has been attributed, with some colour of reason, to his habitual scepticism on matters of higher moment. Mr. Fellowes has observed of him, that he dwelt so much and so exclusively on second causes, that he seems to have forgotten that there is a first. There is no solution of natural effects to which he was not ready to listen, provided it would assist him in getting rid of what he considered an unnecessary intervention of the Supreme Being. A fibre capable of irritability was with him enough to account, not only for the origin of animal life, but for its progress through all its stages. He had thus involved himself in the grossest materialism; but, being endued with an active fancy, he engendered on it theories so wild and chimerical, that they might be regarded with the same kind of wonder as the fictions of romance, if our pleasure were not continually checked by remembering the error in which they originate. What more prodigious transformation shall we read of in Ovid, than that which he supposes the organs of his strange ens to have undergone during the change of our globe from moist to dry?

As in dry air the sea-born stranger roves,
Each muscle quickens, and each sense improves;
Cold gills aquatic form respiring lungs,
And sounds aerial flow from slimy tongues.
Temple of Nature, c. 1.

The peculiarities of the shapes of animals, which distinguished them from each other, he supposes to have been gradually formed by these same irritable fibres, and to have been varied by reproduction. As to the faculties of sensation, volition, and association, they come in afterwards as matters of course, and in a manner so easy and natural, that the only wonder is, what had kept them waiting so long. He mentions, with something like approbation, the hypothesis of Buffon and Helvetius, who, as he tells us, seem to imagine, that mankind arose from one family of monkeys, on the banks of the Mediterranean, who accidentally had learned to use the adductor pollicis, or that strong muscle which constitutes the ball of the thumb and draws the point of it to meet the points of the fingers, which common monkeys do not; and that this muscle gradually increased in size, strength and activity, in successive generations; and that, by this improved use of the sense of the touch, monkeys acquired clear ideas, and gradually became men.

To this he gravely adds, that perhaps all the productions of nature are in their progress to greater

perfection! an idea countenanced by modern discoveries and deductions concerning the progressive formation of the solid parts of this terraqueous globe, and consonant of the dignity of the Creator.

His description of the way in which clear ideas were acquired is not much improved when he puts it into verse.

Nerved with fine touch above the bestial throngs,
The hand, first gift of Heaven! to man belongs:
Untipt with claws, the circling fingers close,
With rival points the bending thumbs oppose,
Trace the nice lines of form with sense refined,
And clear ideas charm the thinking mind.

Temple of Nature, c. 3.

He tells us of a naturalist who had found out a shorter cut to the production of animal life, who thought it not impossible that the first insects were the anthers and stigmas of flowers, which had by some means loosened themselves, from their parent plant, and that other insects in process of time had been formed from these; some acquiring wings, others fins, and others claws, from their ceaseless efforts to procure food, or to secure themselves from injury. What hindered but these insects might have acquired hands, and by those means clear ideas also, is not explained to us.

As great improvements, however, have certainly been made in some way or other, he sees reason to

hope that not less important ameliorations may in time succeed. If our improved chemistry (says he,) should ever discover the art of making sugar from fossile or aerial matter, without the assistance of vegetation, food for animals would then become as plentiful as water, and they might live upon the earth without preying on each other, as thick as blades of grass, without restraint to their numbers but the want of local room: no very comfortable prospect, it must be owned, especially to those who are aware of the alarming ratio in which, according to later discoveries, population is found to multiply itself; a consummation that would scarcely produce that at which he thought it the chief duty of a philosopher to aim: namely, the greatest possible quantity of human happiness. On being made acquainted with reveries such as these, through the means of the press, we are inclined to doubt the justice of his encomium on the art of printing, since which discovery, he tells us, superstition has been much lessened by the reformation of religion; and necromancy, astrology, chiromancy, witchcraft, and vampyrism, have vanished from all classes of society; though some are still so weak in the present enlightened times as to believe in the prodigies of animal magnetism, and of metallic tractors. What then is to be said of the prodigies of spontaneous vitality? To a system which removes the Author of all so far

from our contemplation, we might well prefer the faith of

——— the poor Indian, whose untutor'd mind
Sees God in clouds, and hears him in the wind.

The father of English poetry, who well knew what qualities and habits might with most probability be assigned to men of different professions, has made it a trait in the character of his Doctour of Phisike, that

His study was but little in the Bible.

Though there are illustrious examples of the contrary, yet it may sometimes be with the physician as Shakspeare said of himself, when complaining of the influence which the business of a player had on his mind, that

——— his nature is subdued
To that it works in.

A propensity to materialism had not, however, so subdued the mind of Darwin, as to prevent him from acknowledging the existence of what he terms the Great Cause of Causes, Parent of Parents, Ens Entium. Nay, he went the length of maintaining, that his doctrine of spontaneous vitality was not inconsistent with Scripture.

But whatever may be thought of his creed, it must be recorded of him that he discharged some of the best duties of religion in a manner that would have

become its most zealous professors. He was bountiful to the poor, and hospitable to his equals. To the inferior clergy, when he resided at Lichfield, he gave his advice unfeed, and he attended diligently to the health of those who were unable to requite him. Johnson is said, when he visited his native city, to have shunned the society of Darwin: Cowper, who certainly was as firm a believer as Johnson, thought it no disparagement to his orthodoxy, to address some complimentary verses to him on the publication of his Botanic Garden.

This poem ought not to be considered more than as a capriccio, or sport of the fancy, on which he has expended much labour to little purpose. It does not pretend to anything like correctness of design, or continuity of action. It is like a picture of Breughel's, where every thing is highly coloured, and every thing out of order. In the first part, called the Economy of Vegetation, the Goddess of Botany appears with her attendants, the Powers of the Four Elements, for no other purpose than to describe to them their several functions in carrying on the operations of nature. In the second, which has no necessary connection with the first, the Botanic Muse describes the Loves of the Plants. Here the fiction is puerile, and built on a system which is itself in danger of vanishing into air. At the end of the second canto, the Muse takes a dish of tea, which I think is the only thing of any

consequence that is done throughout. The second part has been charged with an immoral tendency; but Miss Seward has observed, with much truth, that it is a burlesque upon morality to make the amours of the plants responsible at its tribunal; and that the impurity is in the imagination of the reader, not in the pages of the poet. For these amours, he might have found a better motto than that which he has prefixed from Claudian, in the following stanza of Marini.

> Ne' fior ne' fiori istessi Amor ha loco,
> Ama il giglio il ligustro e l'amaranto,
> E Narciso e Giacinto, Ajace e Croco,
> E con la bella Clitia il vago Acanto;
> Arde la Rosa di vermiglio foco,
> L'odor sospiro e la rugiada è pianto:
> Ride la Calta, e pallida e essangue
> Vinta d'amor la violetta langue.
>
> *Adone*, Canto 6.

He was apt to confound the odd with the grotesque, and to mistake the absurd for the fanciful. By an excellent landscape-painter now living, I was told that Darwin proposed as a subject for his pencil, a shower, in which there should be represented a redbreast holding up an expanded umbrella in its claws.

An Italian critic, following a division made by Plotinus, has distributed the poets into three classes, which he calls the musical, the amatorial, and the

philosophic. In the first, he places those who are studious of softness and harmony in their numbers; in the second, such as content themselves with describing accurately the outward appearances of real or fanciful objects; and in the third, those who penetrate to the qualities of things, draw out their hidden beauties, and separate what is really and truly fair from that which has only its exterior semblance. Among the second of these, Darwin might claim for himself no mean station. It was, indeed, a notion he had taken up, that as the ideas derived from visible objects (to use his own words) are more distinct than those derived from any other source, the words expressive of those ideas belonging to vision make up the principal part of poetic language. So entirely was he engrossed by this persuasion, as, too frequently, to forget that the admirers of poetry have not only eyes but ears and hearts also; and that therefore harmony and pathos are required of the poet, no less than a faithful delineation of visible objects.

Yet there is something in his versification also that may be considered as his own. His numbers have less resemblance to Pope's, than Pope's to those of Dryden. Whether the novelty be such as to reflect much credit on the inventor, is another question. His secret, was, I think, to take those lines in Pope which seemed to him the most diligently elaborated, and to

model his own upon them. But with those forms of verse which he borrowed more particularly from Pope, in which one part is equally balanced by the other, and of which each is complete in itself without reference to those which precede or follow it, he has mingled one or two others that had been used by our elder poets, but almost entirely rejected by the refiners of the couplet measure till the time of Langhorne; as where the substantive and its epithet are so placed, that the latter makes the end of an iambic in the second, and the former the beginning of a trochee in the third foot.

And showers | thĕ stīll | snōw frŏm | his hoary urns.
Darwin, Botanic Garden, p. 1, c. 2, 28.

Or dart | thĕ rēd | flāsh thrŏugh | the circling band.
Ibid. 361.

Or rests | hĕr faīr | chēek ŏn | his curled brows.
Ibid. c. 2, 252.

Deserve | ă swēet | lōok frŏm | Demetrius' eye.
Shakspeare, Mid. N. D.

Infect | thĕ soūnd | pīne ănd | divert his grain.
Shakespeare, Tempest.

Which on | thy sōft | chēek fŏr | complexion dwells.
Shakspeare, Sonnet 99.

To lay | thĕir jūst | hānds ŏn | the golden key.
Milton, Comus.

Or where they make the end of an iambic in the

first, and the beginning of a spondee in the second foot, as

Thĕ wān | stārs glīm|mering through its silver train.
Botanic Garden, p. 1, c. 1, 135.
Thĕ brīght | drōps rōl|ling from her lifted arms.
Ibid. c. 2, 59.
Thĕ pāle | lāmp glīm|mering through the sculptur'd ice.
Ibid. 134.
Hĕr faīr | chēek prēss'd | upon her lily hand.
Temple of Nature, c. 1, 436.
Thĕ foūl | bōar's cōn|quest on her fair delight.
Shakspeare, Venus and Adonis, 1030.
Thĕ rēd | blōod rōck'd | to show the painter's strife.
Ibid. Rape of Lucrece, 1377.

There is so little complexity in the construction of his sentences, that they may generally be reduced to a few of the first and simplest rules of syntax. On these he rings what changes he may, by putting the verb before its nominative or vocative case. Thus in the following verses from the Temple of Nature:

On rapid feet o'er hills, and plains, and rocks,
Speed the sacred leveret and rapacious fox;
On rapid pinions cleave the fields above,
The hawk descending, and escaping dove;
With nicer nostril track the tainted ground,
The hungry vulture, and the prowling hound;
Converge reflected light with nicer eye,
The midnight owl, and microscopic fly;

With finer ear pursue their nightly course,
The listening lion, and the alarmed horse.

C. 3, 93.

Sometimes he alternates the forms; as

In Eden's groves, the cradle of the world,
Bloom'd a fair tree with mystic flowers unfurl'd;
On bending branches, as aloft it sprung,
Forbid to taste, the fruit of knowledge hung;
Flow'd with sweet innocence the tranquil hours,
And love and beauty warm'd the blissful bowers.

Ibid. 449.

The last line or the middle of the last line in almost every sentence throughout his poems, begins with a conjunction affirmative or negative, *and,* or *nor;* and this last line is often so weak, that it breaks down under the rest. Thus in this very pretty impression, as it may almost be called, of an ancient gem;

So playful Love on Ida's flowery sides
With ribbon-rein the indignant lion guides;
Pleased on his brindled back the lyre he rings,
And shakes delirious rapture from the strings;
Slow as the pausing monarch stalks along,
Sheathes his retractile claws, and drinks the song.
Soft nymphs on timid step the triumph view,
And listening fauns with beating hoofs pursue;
With pointed ears the alarmed forest starts,
And love and music soften savage hearts.

Botanic Garden, c. 4. 252.

And in an exceedingly happy description of what is termed the picturesque:

The rush-thatch'd cottage on the purple moor,
Where ruddy children frolic round the door,
The moss-grown antlers of the aged oak,
The shaggy locks that fringe the colt unbroke,
The bearded goat with nimble eyes, that glare
Through the long tissue of his hoary hair,
As with quick foot he climbs some ruin'd wall,
And crops the ivy which prevents its fall,
With rural charms the tranquil mind delight,
And form a picture to the admiring sight.

Temple of Nature, c. 3, 248.

And in his lines on the Eagle, from another gem:

So when with bristling plumes the bird of Jove,
Vindictive leaves the argent fields above,
Borne on broad wings the guilty world he awes,
And grasps the lightning in his shining claws.

Botanic Garden, p. 1, c. 1, 205.

where I cannot but observe the peculiar beauty of the epithet applied to the plumes of the eagle. It is the right translation of the word by which Pindar has described the ruffling of the wings on the back of Zetes and Calaïs.

——πτεροῖσιν νῶτα πε-
φρίκοντας ἄμφω πορφυρέοις.

Pyth. 4, 326.

which an Italian translator has entirely mistaken;

> Uomin' ambi, ch'orrore a' risguardanti
> Facean coi rosseggianti
> Vanni del tergo.

But Darwin could have known nothing of Pindar; and the word may perhaps be found with a similar application in one of our own poets.

As the singularity of his poems caused them to be too much admired at first, so are they now more neglected than they deserve. There is about as much variety in them as in a bed of tulips, of which the shape is the same in all, except that some are a little more rounded at the points than others; yet they are diversely streaked and freckled, with a profusion of gay tints, in which the bizarre (as it is called by the fanciers of that flower) prevails. They are a sight for one half hour in the spring, and no more; and are utterly devoid of odour.

WILLIAM JULIUS MICKLE.

WILLIAM Julius Mickle was born on the 29th of September, 1734, at Longholm, in the county of Dumfries, of which place his father, Alexander Meikle, or Mickle, a minister of the church of Scotland, was pastor. His mother was Julia, daughter of Thomas Henderson, of Ploughlands, near Edinburgh. In his thirteenth year, his love of poetry was kindled by reading Spenser's Faëry Queen. Two years after, his father, who was grown old and infirm, and had a large family to educate, by an unusual indulgence obtained permission to reside in Edinburgh, where Mickle was admitted a pupil at the High School. Here he remained long enough to acquire a relish for the Greek and Latin classics. When he was seventeen years old, his father unluckily embarking his capital in a brewery, which the death of his wife's brother had left without a manager, William was taken from school, and employed as clerk under the eldest son, in whose name the business was carried on. At first he must have been attentive enough to his employment; for on his coming of age, the property was made over to him, on the condition of paying his family a certain share of the profits arising from it. Afterwards, he suffered

himself to be seduced from business by the attractions of literature. His father died in 1758; and, in about three years he published, without his name, Knowledge, an Ode, and a Night Piece, the former of which had been written in his eighteenth year. In both there is more of seriousness and reflection than of that fancy which marks his subsequent productions. Beside these, he had finished a drama, called the Death of Socrates, of which, if we may judge from his other tragedy, the loss is not to be lamented, and he had begun a poem on Providence. The difficulties consequent on his trusting to servants the work of his brewery, which he was too indolent to superintend himself, and on his joining in security for a large sum with a printer who failed, were now gathering fast upon him. His creditors became clamorous; and at Candlemas (one of the quarter days in Scotland) 1762, being equally unwilling to compound with them, as his brother advised him to do, and unable to satisfy their demands, he prevailed on them to accept his notes of hand, payable in four months. When the time was expired, he found himself, as might have been expected, involved in embarrassments from which he could devise no means of escaping. His mind was harassed by bitter reflections on the distress which threatened those whom his parent had left to his protection; and he was scared by the terrors of

a jail. But they, with whom he had to reckon, were again lenient. He consoled himself with recollecting that his delinquency had proceeded from inadvertence, not from design, and resolved to be more sedulous in future: but had still the weakness to trust for relief to his poem on Providence. This was soon after published by Dodsley, and, that it might win for itself such advantages as patronage could give, was sent to Lord Lyttelton, under the assumed name of William Moore, with a representation that the author was a youth, friendless and unknown, and with the offer of a dedication if the poem should be again edited. This proceeding did not evince much knowledge of mankind. A poet has as seldom gained a patron as a mistress, by solicitation to which no previous encouragement has been given. It was more than half a year before he received an answer from Lyttelton, with just kindness enough to keep alive his expectations. In the meantime, the friendly offices of a carpenter in Edinburgh, whose name was Good, had been exerted to save his property from being seized for rent; but the fear of arrest impelled him to quit that city in haste; and embarking on board a coal vessel at Newcastle, he reached London, pennyless, in May, 1763. His immediate necessities were supplied by remittances from his brothers, and by such profits as he could derive from writing for periodical publications.

There is no reason to suppose that he was indebted to Lyttelton for more than the commendation of his genius, and for some criticism on his poems; and even this favour was denied to the most beautiful among them, his Elegy on Mary, Queen of Scots. The cause assigned for the exclusion was, that poetry should not consecrate what history must condemn, a sacred principle if it be applied to the characters of those yet living, but of more doubtful obligation as it regards past times. When Euripides, in one of his dramas, chose to avail himself of a wild and unauthorized tradition, and to represent Helen as spotless, he surely violated no sanction of moral truth; and in the instance of Mary, Mickle might have pleaded some uncertainty which a poet was at liberty to interpret to the better part.

During his courtship of Lyttelton he was fed at one time by hopes of being recommended in the West Indies; and, at another, of being served in the East; till by degrees the great man waxed so cold, that he wisely relinquished his suit. His next project was to go out as a merchant's clerk to Carolina; but some unexpected occurrences defeating this plan also, he engaged himself as corrector of the Clarendon press, at Oxford. Here he published (in 1767) the Concubine, a poem, in the manner of Spenser, to which, when it was printed, ten years after, having

in the meantime passed through several editions, he gave the title of Syr Martyn.

Early in life, his zeal for religion had shewn itself in some remarks on an impious book termed the History of the Man after God's own Heart; and in 1767, the same feelings induced him to publish A Vindication of the Divinity of Jesus Christ, in a Letter to Dr. Harwood; and, in the year following, Voltaire in the Shades, or Dialogues on the Deistical Controversy.

He was now willing to try his fortune with a tragedy, and sent his Siege of Marseilles to Garrick, who observed to him, that though abounding in beautiful passages, it was deficient in dramatic art, and advised him to model it anew; in which task, having been assisted by the author of Douglas, and having submitted the rifacciamento of his play to the two Wartons, by whom he was much regarded, he promised himself better success; but had the mortification to meet with a second rebuff. An appeal from the manager to the public was his unquestioned privilege; but not contented with seeking redress by these means, he threatened Garrick with a new Dunciad. The rejection which his drama afterwards underwent at each of the playhouses, from the respective managers, Harris and Sheridan, perhaps taught him at least to suspect his own judgment.

In 1772, being employed to edit Pearch's Collection of Poems, he inserted amongst them his Hengist and Mey, and the Elegy on Mary. About the same time he wrote for the Whitehall Evening Post. But his mind was now attracted to a more splendid project. This was a translation of the great Epic Poem of Portugal, the Lusiad of Camoens, which had as yet been represented to the English reader only through the inadequate version of Fanshaw. That nothing might hinder his prosecution of this labour, he resigned his employment at Oxford, and retired to a farm-house at Forrest-hill, about five miles from that city, the village in which Milton found his first wife, and where Mickle afterwards found his in the daughter of his landlord. By the end of 1775, his translation was completed and published at Oxford, with a numerous list of subscribers. Experience had not yet taught him wariness in his approaches to his patron. At the suggestion of his relative, Commodore Johnstone, in an unlucky moment he inscribed his book to the Duke of Buccleugh. This nobleman had declared his acceptance of the dedication in a manner so gracious, that Mickle was once more decoyed with the hope of having found a powerful protector. After an interval of some months, he learnt that his incense had not been permitted to enter the nostrils of the new idol, and that his offering lay, where he left it, without the

slightest notice. For this disappointment he might have considered it to be some compensation that his work had procured him the kindness of those who were more able to estimate it. Mr. Crowe assisted him in compiling the notes; Lowth offered to ordain him, with the promise of making some provision for him in the church; and one, whose humanity and candour are among the chief ornaments of the bench on which Lowth then sate, Doctor Bathurst, soothed him by those benevolent offices which he delights to extend to the neglected and the oppressed. Nor were the public insensible to the value of his translation. A second edition was called for in 1778; and his gains amounted on the whole to near a thousand pounds, a larger sum than was likely to fall to the share of an author, who so little understood the art of making his way in the world. It was not, however, considerable enough to last long against the calls made on it for the payment of old debts, and for the support of his sisters; and he was devising further means of supplying his necessities by a subscription for his poems, when Commodore Johnstone (in 1779) being appointed to head a squadron of ships, nominated him his secretary, on board the Romney. Mickle had hitherto struggled through a life of anxiety and indigence; but a gleam of prosperity came over the few years that remained. A good share of prize-money fell to his

lot; and the squadron having been fortunately ordered to Lisbon, he was there received with so much distinction, that it would seem as if the Portuguese had been willing to make some amends for their neglect of Camoens, by the deference which they shewed his translator. Prince John, the uncle to the Queen, was ready on the Quay to welcome him at landing; and during a residence of more than six months he was gratified by the attentions of the principal men of the country. At the first institution of the Royal Academy at Lisbon, he was enrolled one of the Members. Here he composed Almada Hill, an epistle from Lisbon, which was published in the next year; and designing to write a History of Portugal, he brought together some materials for that purpose.

When he had returned to England, he was so much enriched by his agency for the disposal of the prizes which had been made during the cruise, and by his own portion of the prize-money, that he was enabled to discharge honourably the claims which his creditors still had on him, and to settle himself with a prospect of independence and ease. He accordingly married Mary, the daughter of Mr. Robert Tompkins, of Forrest-hill, and took a house at Wheatley, a little village about five miles from Oxford. Some interruption to his tranquillity occurred from the failure of a banker, with whom his agency had

connected him, and from a chancery suit, in which he too hastily engaged to secure a part of his wife's fortune. He then resumed his intention of publishing his poems by subscription, and continued still to exercise his pen. His remaining productions were a tract, entitled The Prophecy of Queen Emma, an ancient Ballad, &c., with Hints towards a Vindication of the Authenticity of the Poems of Ossian and Rowley (in 1782), and some essays, called Fragments of Leo, and some reviews of books, both which he contributed to the European Magazine. He died after a short illness, on the 25th of October, 1788, at Forrest-hill, while on a visit at the house of his father-in-law; and was buried at that place. He left one son, who was an extra-clerk in the India House, in 1806, when the Life of Mickle was written by the Rev. John Sim, a friend on whom he enjoined that task, and who, I doubt not, has performed it with fidelity.

Mickle was a man of strong natural powers, which he had not always properly under controul. When he is satisfied to describe with little apparent effort what he has himself felt or conceived, as in his ballads and songs, he is at times eminently happy. He has generally erred on the side of the too much rather than of the too little. His defect is not so much want of genius as of taste. His thoughts were forcible and vivid; but the words in which he clothed

them, are sometimes ill-chosen, and sometimes awkwardly disposed. He degenerates occasionally into mere turgidness and verbosity, as in the following lines:

Oh, partner of my infant grief and joys!
Big with the scenes now past my heart o'erflows,
Bids each endearment fair at once to rise,
And dwells luxurious on her melting woes.

When his stanza forced him to lop off this vain superfluity of words, that the sense might be brought within a narrower compass, he succeeded better. Who would suppose, that these verses could have proceeded from the same man that had written the well known song, beginning "And are ye sure the news is true," from which there is not a word that can be taken without injury, and which seems so well to answer the description of a simple and popular song in Shakspeare?

——————— It is old and plain:
The songsters, and the knitters in the sun,
And the free maids that weave their threads with bone,
Do use to chaunt it. It is silly sooth,
And dallies with the innocence of love,
Like the old age.

Syr Martyn is the longest of his poems. He could not have chosen a subject in itself much less capable of embellishment. But whatever the pomp

of machinery or profuseness of description could contribute to its decoration has not been spared. After an elaborate invocation of the powers that preside over the stream of Mulla, a "reverend wizard" is conjured up in the eye of the poet; and the wizard in his turn conjures up scene after scene, in which appear the hopeful young knight, Syr Martyn, "possest of goodly Baronie," the dairy-maid, Kathrin, by whose wiles he is inveigled into an illicit amour, the good aunt who soon dies of chagrin at this unworthy attachment, the young brood who are the offspring of the ill-sorted match, his brother, an openhearted sailor, who is hindered by the artifices of Kathrin from gaining access to the house, and lastly, the "fair nymph Dissipation," with whom Syr Martyn seeks refuge from his unpleasant recollections, and who conspires with "the lazy fiend, Self-Imposition," to conduct him to the "dreary cave of Discontent," where the poet leaves him, and "the reverend wizard" (for aught we hear to the contrary) in his company. Mean and familiar incidents and characters do not sort well with allegory, which requires beings that are themselves somewhat removed from the common sphere of human nature to meet and join it a little beyond the limits of this world. Yet in this tale, incongruous and disjointed as the dream of a sick man, velut ægri somnia, he has interspersed some lines, and even whole stanzas, to

which the poet or the painter may turn again and again with delight, though the common reader will scarce find them sufficient to redeem the want of interest that pervades the whole.

His elegy on Mary, Queen of Scots, is also a vision, but it is better managed, at once mournful and sweet. He has thrown a pall of gorgeous embroidery over the bloody hearse of Mary.

Wolfwold and Ella, of which the story was suggested by a picture of Mortimer's, is itself a picture, in which the fine colouring and spirited attitudes reconcile us to its horrors.

His tragedy is a tissue of love and intrigue, with sudden starts of passion, and unprepared and improbable turns of resolution and temper. Towards the conclusion, one of the female characters puts an end to herself, for little apparent reason, except that it is the fifth act, and some blood must therefore be shed; Garrick's refusal, in all likelihood, spared him the worse mortification of seeing it rejected on the stage. Yet there is here and there in it a masterly touch like the following:

> Either my mind has lost its energy,
> Or the unbodied spirits of my fathers,
> Beneath the night's dark wings, pass to and fro,
> In doleful agitation hovering round me.
> Methought my father, with a mournful look,
> Beheld me. Sudden from unconscious pause
> I wak'd, and but his marble bust was here.

Almada Hill has some just sentiments, and some pleasing imagery; but both are involved in the mazes of an unskilful or ambitious phraseology, from which it is a work of trouble to extricate them. It was about this time, that the laboured style in poetry had reached its height. Not "to loiter into prose," of which Lyttelton bade him beware, was the grand aim; and in their eagerness to leave prose as far behind them as possible, the poets were in danger of outstripping the understanding and feelings of their readers. It was this want of ease and perspicuity in his longer pieces, which prevented Mickle from being as much a favourite with the public, as many who were far his inferiors in the other qualities of a poet. When a writer is obscure, only because his reasoning is too abstruse, his fancy too lively, or his allusions too learned for the vulgar, it is more just that we should complain of ourselves for not being able to rise to his level, than of him for not descending to our's. But let the difficulty arise from mere imperfections of language, and the consciousness of having solved an involuntary enigma is scarcely sufficient to reward our pains.

The translation of the Lusiad is that by which he is best known. In this, as in his original poems, the expression is sometimes very faulty; but he is never flat or insipid. In the numbers, there is much sweetness and freedom: and though they have some-

what of the masculine melody of Dryden, yet they have something also that is peculiarly his own. He has in a few instances enriched the language of poetry by combinations unborrowed from any of his predecessors. It is doubtful whether as much can be said for Pope's translation of Homer. Almost all who have written much in the couplet measure, since Waller clipped it into uniformity, have been at times reduced to the necessity of eking out their lines in some way or other so as to make the sense reach its prescribed bound. Most have done it by means of epithets, which were always found to be "friends in need." Mickle either breaks the lines with a freedom and spirit which were then unusual, or repeats something of what has gone before, a contrivance that ought to be employed sparingly, and used chiefly when it is desirable to produce the effect of sweetness.

The preference which he sometimes claims in the notes for his author, above the other epic poets of ancient and modern times, is less likely to conciliate the good opinion than to excite the disgust of his readers. There is no artifice that a translator can resort to with less chance of success, than this blowing of the showman's trumpet as he goes on exhibiting the wonders of his original. There are some puerile hyperboles, for which I know not whether he or Camoens is responsible; such as—

The mountain echoes catch the big swoln sighs.
The yellow sands with tears are silver'd o'er.

Johnson told him that he had once intended to translate the Lusiad. The version would have had fewer faults, but it may be questioned whether the general result would have been as much animation and harmony as have been produced by Mickle.

In addition to the poems, which were confessedly his, there are no less than seventeen in Mr. Evans's collection of Ballads, of which a writer in the Quarterly Review* some years ago expressed his suspicion that they were from the pen of Mickle. It has been found on inquiry, that the suggestion of this judicious critic is fully confirmed. One of these has lately been brought into notice from its having formed the groundwork of one of those deservedly popular stories, which have lately come to us from the north of the Tweed. It is to be wished that Mickle's right in all of them were formally recog-

* For May 1810, No. VI. The title of the Ballads are Bishop Thurston, and the King of Scots, Battle of Caton Moor, Murder of Prince Arthur, Prince Edward, and Adam Gordon, Cumner Hall, Arabella Stuart, Anna Bullen, the Lady and the Palmer, The Fair Maniac, The Bridal Bed, The Lordling Peasant, The Red Cross Knight, The Wandering Maid, The Triumph of Death, Julia, The Fruits of Jealousy, and The Death of Allen.

nized, and that they should be no longer withheld from their place amongst his other poetical writings, to which they would form so valuable an accession.

JAMES BEATTIE.

James Beattie was born on the 25th of October, 1735, at Laurencekirk, in the county of Kincardine, in Scotland. His father, who kept a small shop in that place, and rented a little farm near it, is said to have been a man of acquirements superior to his condition. At his death, the management of his concerns devolved on his widow. David, the eldest of her six children, was of an age to assist his mother. James, the youngest, she placed at the parish school of his native village, which about forty years before had been raised to some celebrity by Ruddiman, the grammarian, and was then kept by one Milne. This man had also a competent skill in grammar. His other deficiencies were supplied by the natural quickness of his pupil, and by the attention of Mr. Thomson, the minister of Laurencekirk, who, being a man of learning, admitted young Beattie to the use of his library, and probably animated him by his encourage-

ment. He very early became sensible to the charms of English verse, to which he was first awakened by the perusal of Ogilby's Virgil. Before he was ten years old, he was as well acquainted with that writer and Homer, as the versions of Pope and Dryden could make him. His schoolfellows distinguished him by the name of the Poet.

At the age of fourteen, he was sent to Marischal College, Aberdeen, where he attended the Greek class, taught by Dr. Blackwell, author of the Memoirs of the Court of Augustus, and was by him singled out as the most promising of his scholars. The slender pittance spared him by his mother would scarcely have sufficed for his support, if he had not added to it one of the bursaries or pensions that were bestowed on the most deserving candidates. Of a discourse which he was called on to deliver at the Divinity Hall, it was observed, that he spoke poetry in prose. Thomson was censured for a similar impropriety in one of his youthful exercises; but Beattie gained the applause of his audience.

His academical education being completed, on the 1st of August, 1753, he was satisfied with the humble appointment of parish-clerk and schoolmaster at the village of Fordoun, about six miles distant from Laurencekirk. Here he attracted the notice of Mr. Garden, at that time sheriff of the county, and afterwards one of the Scotch judges, with the appellation

of Lord Gardenstown. In a romantic glen near his house, he chanced to find Beattie with pencil and paper in his hand; and, on questioning him, discovered that he was engaged in the composition of a poem. Mr. Garden desired to see some of his other poems; and doubting whether they were his own productions, requested him to translate the invocation to Venus at the opening of Lucretius, which Beattie did in such a manner as to remove his incredulity. In this retirement, he also became known to Lord Monboddo, whose family seat was in the parish; and a friendly intercourse ensued, which did not terminate till the death of that learned but visionary man. In 1758, he was removed from his employment at Fordoun, to that of usher in the Grammar School at Aberdeen, for which he had been an unsuccessful competitor in the preceding year, but was now nominated without the form of a trial.

At Aberdeen, his heart seems to have taken up its rest; for no temptations could afterwards seduce him for any length of time to quit it. The professorship of Natural Philosophy in the Marischal College, where he had lately been a student, being vacant in 1760, Mr. Arbuthnot, one of his friends, exerted himself with so much zeal in the behalf of Beattie, that he obtained that appointment; although the promotion was such as his most sanguine wishes did not aspire to. Soon after he was further gratified, by

being permitted to exchange it for the professorship of Moral Philosophy and Logic, for which he thought himself better fitted. In discharge of the duties belonging to his new function, he immediately entered on a course of lectures, which, as appears from his diary in the possession of Sir William Forbes, he repeated with much diligence for more than thirty years.

This occupation could not have been very favourable to his poetical propensity. He had, since his twentieth year, been occasionally a contributor of verse to the Scots Magazine; and in 1760, he published a collection of poems, inscribed to the Earl of Erroll, to whose intervention he had been partly indebted for the office he held in the college. Though the number of these pieces was not considerable, he omitted several of them in subsequent editions, and among others a translation of Virgil's Eclogues, some specimens of which, adduced in a letter written by Lord Woodhouselee, author of the Principles of Translation, will stand a comparison with the parallel passages in Dryden and Warton.

In the summer of 1763, his curiosity led him for the first time to London, where Andrew Millar the bookseller, was almost his only acquaintance. Of this journey no particular is recorded but that he visited Pope's house at Twickenham.

In 1765, having sent a letter of compliment to Gray,

then on a visit to the Earl of Strathmore, he was invited to Glammis Castle, the residence of that nobleman, to meet the English poet, in whom he found such a combination of excellence as he had hitherto been a stranger to. This appears from a letter written to Sir William Forbes, his faithful friend and biographer, with whom his intimacy commenced about the same time.

I am sorry you did not see Mr. Gray on his return; you would have been much pleased with him. Setting aside his merit as a poet, which, however, in my opinion, is greater than any of his contemporaries can boast, in this or in any other nation, I found him possessed of the most exact taste, the soundest judgment, and the most extensive learning. He is happy in a singular facility of expression. His conversation abounds in original observations, delivered with no appearance of sententious formality, and seeming to arise spontaneously, without study or premeditation. I passed two very agreeable days with him at Glammis, and found him as easy in his manners, and as communicative and frank as I could have wished.

Gray could not have requited him with such excess of admiration; but continued during the rest of his life to regard Beattie with affection and esteem.

It was not till the spring of this year, when his Judgment of Paris was printed, that he again appeared before the public as an author. This piece he

inserted in the next editon of his poems, in 1766, but his more mature judgment afterwards induced him to reject it. Some satirical verses on the death of Churchill, at first published without his name, underwent the same fate. The Wolf and the Shepherds, a Fable, and an Epistle to the Rev. Mr. Thomas Blacklock, which appeared in the second edition, he also discarded from those subsequently published. He now projected and began the Minstrel, the most popular of his poems. Had the original plan been adhered to, it would have embraced a much wider scope.

In 1767, he married Mary, the daughter of Dr. Dun, rector of the Grammar School at Aberdeen. This union was not productive of the happiness which a long course of previous intimacy had entitled him to expect. The object of his choice inherited from her mother a constitutional malady which at first shewed itself in capricious waywardness, and at length broke out into insanity.

From this misery he sought refuge in the exercise of his mind. His residence at Aberdeen had brought him into the society of several among his countrymen who were engaged in researches well suited to employ his attention to its utmost stretch. Of these the names of Reid, author of An Inquiry into the Human Mind on the Principles of Common Sense—and Campbell, Principal of Marischal College, author

of An Essay on Miracles, are the most distinguished. His own correspondence with his friends about this time evinces deep concern at the progress of the sceptical philosophy, diffused by the writings of Hobbes, Hume, Mandeville, and even, in his opinion, of Locke and Berkeley. Conceiving the study of metaphysics itself to be the origin of this mischief, in order that the evil might be intercepted at its source, he proposed to demonstrate the futility of that science, and to appeal to the common sense and unsophisticated feelings of mankind, as the only infallible criterion on subjects in which it had formerly been made the standard. That his meaning was excellent, no one can doubt; whether he discovered the right remedy for the harm which he was desirous of removing, is much more questionable. To magnify any branch of human knowledge beyond its just importance may, indeed, tend to weaken the force of religious faith; but many acute metaphysicans have been good Christians; and before the question thus agitated can be set at rest, we must suppose a certain proficiency in those inquiries which he would proscribe as dangerous. After all, we can discover no more reason why sciolists in metaphysics should bring that study into discredit, than that religion itself should be disparaged through the extravagance of fanaticism. To have met the subject fully, he ought to have shewn that not only those opinions which he controverts are erroneous, but that

all the systems of former metaphysicians were so likewise.

The Essay on Truth, in which he endeavoured to establish his own hypothesis, being finished in 1769, he employed Sir William Forbes and Mr. Arbuthnot to negotiate its sale with the booksellers. They, however, refused to purchase it on any terms; and the work would have remained unpublished, if his two friends, making use of a little pious fraud, had not informed him that the manuscript was sold for fifty guineas, a sum which they at the same time remitted him, and that they had stipulated with the booksellers to be partakers in the profits. The book accordingly appeared in the following year; and having gained many admirers, was quickly followed by a second impression, which he revised and corrected with much pains.

In the autumn of 1771, he again visited London, where the reputation obtained by the Essay and by the first book of the Minstrel, then recently published, opened for him an introduction into the circles most respectable for rank and literature. Lord Lyttelton declared that it seemed to him his once most beloved minstrel, Thomson, was come down from Heaven refined by the converse of purer spirits than those he lived with here, to let him hear him sing again the beauties of nature and the finest feelings of virtue, not with human, but with angelic strains. He

added his wishes that it were in his power to do Beattie any service. From Mrs. Montagu he on different occasions received more substantial tokens of regard.

Except the trifling emolument derived from his writings, he had hitherto been supported merely by the small income appended to his professorship. But the Earl of Dartmouth, a nobleman to whom nothing that concerned the interests of religion was indifferent, representing him as a fit object of the royal bounty, a pension of two hundred pounds a year was now granted him. Previously to his obtaining this favour, he was first presented to the King, and was then honoured by an interview with both their Majesties. The particulars of this visit were minutely recorded in his diary. After much commendation of his Essay, the sovereign pleasantly told him that he had never stolen but one book, and that was his. "I stole it from the Queen," said his Majesty, "to give it to Lord Hertford to read." In the course of the conversation, many questions were put to him concerning the Scotch Universities, the revenues of the Scotch clergy, and their mode of preaching and praying. When Beattie replied, that their clergy sometimes prayed a quarter or even half an hour without interruption, the King observed, that this practice must lead into repetitions; and that even our own liturgy, excellent as it is, is faulty in this respect. While

the subject of his pension was under consideration, the Queen made a tender of some present to him through Dr. Majendie, but he declined to encroach on her Majesty's munificence, unless the application made to the crown in his behalf should prove unsuccessful. A mercenary spirit, indeed, was not one of his weaknesses. Being on a visit at Bulstrode, his noble hostess the Duchess of Portland, would have had him take a present of a hundred pounds to defray the expenses of his journey into England; but he excused himself, as well as he was able, for not accepting her Grace's bounty.

With his pension, his wishes appear to have been bounded. Temptation to enter into orders in our church was thrice offered him, and as often rejected; once in the shape of a general promise of patronage from Dr. Drummond, Archbishop of York; next, of a small living in Dorsetshire, in the gift of Mr. John Pitt: and the third time, of a much more valuable benefice, which was at the disposal of Dr. Thomas, Bishop of Winchester. In answer to Dr. Porteus, through whom the last of these offers came, and whose friendship he enjoyed during the remainder of his life, he represented, in addition to other reasons for his refusal, that he was apprehensive lest his acceptance of preferment might render the motives for his writing the Essay on Truth suspected. He at the same time avowed, that if "he were to have

become a clergyman, the church of England would certainly have been his choice; as he thought that in regard to church-government and church-service, it had many great and peculiar advantages." Unwillingness to part from Aberdeen was, perhaps, at the bottom of these stout resolutions. It was confessedly one of the reasons for which he declined a proposition made to him in the year 1773, to remove to the chair of Moral Philosophy in Edinburgh; though he was urged by his friends not to neglect this opportunity of extending the sphere of his usefulness, and the change would have brought him much pecuniary advantage. His reluctance to comply was increased by the belief that there were certain persons at Edinburgh to whom his principles had given offence, and in whose neighbourhood he did not expect to live so quietly as he wished. In the same year, he was complimented with the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws, by the University of Oxford, at the installation of Lord North in the Chancellorship.

He now, therefore, lived on at Aberdeen, making occasionally brief visits to England, where he was always welcome, both at the court and by those many individuals of eminence to whom his talents and virtues had recommended him. In the summers he usually indulged himself with passing some time at Peterhead, a town situated on the most easterly

promontory of Scotland, and resorted to for its medicinal waters, which he thought beneficial to his health; for he had early in life been subject to a vertiginous disorder, the recurrence of which at times incapacitated him for any serious application.

The second book of the Minstrel appeared in 1774. In 1776 he was prevailed on to publish, by subscription, in a more splendid form, his Essay on Truth, which was now accompanied by two other essays, on Poetry and Music, and on Laughter and Ludicrous Composition; and by Remarks on the Utility of Classical Learning. This was succeeded in 1783, by dissertations moral and critical, on Memory and Imagination, on Dreaming, on the Theory of Language, on Fable and Romance, on the Attachments of Kindred, and on Illustrations of Sublimity; being, as he states in the preface, "part of a course of prelections read to those young gentlemen whom it was his business to initiate in the elements of moral science." In 1786, he published a small treatise, entitled Evidences of the Christian Religion, at the suggestion of Porteus, who was now a bishop; and in 1790 and 1793 two volumes of Elements of Moral Science, containing an abridgment of his public lectures on moral philosophy and logic.

His only remaining publication was an edition of the juvenile works of the elder of his two sons, who was taken off by a consumption (November 1790),

at the age of twenty-two. To the education of this boy he had attended with such care and discernment as the anxiety of a parent only could dictate, and had watched his unfolding excellence with fondness such as none but a parent could feel. At the risque of telling my reader what he may, perhaps, well remember, I cannot but relate the method which he had taken to impress on his mind, when a child, the sense of his dependence on a Supreme Being; of which Porteus well observed, that it had all the imagination of Rousseau, without his folly and extravagance.

"The doctrines of religion," said Beattie, "I had wished to impress on his mind, as soon as it might be prepared to receive them; but I did not see the propriety of making him commit to memory theological sentences, or any sentences which it was not possible for him to understand. And I was desirous to make a trial how far his own reason could go in tracing out, with a little direction, the great and first principle of all religion, the being of God. The following fact is mentioned, not as a proof of superior sagacity in him (for I have no doubt that most children would, in like circumstances, think as he did), but merely as a moral or logical experiment. He had reached his fifth or sixth year, knew the alphabet, and could read a little; but had received no particular information with respect to the Author of his being: because I thought he could not yet understand such information; and be-

cause I had learned, from my own experience, that to be made to repeat words not understood, is extremely detrimental to the faculties of a young mind. In a corner of a little garden, without informing any person of the circumstance, I wrote in the mould, with my finger, the three initial letters of his name; and sowing garden cresses in the furrows, covered up the seed, and smoothed the ground. Ten days after, he came running to me, and with astonishment in his countenance told me, that his name was growing in the garden. I smiled at the report, and seemed inclined to disregard it; but he insisted on my going to see what had happened. 'Yes,' said I, carelessly, on coming to the place, 'I see it is so; but there is nothing in this worth notice; it is mere chance;' and I went away. He followed me, and taking hold of my coat, said with some earnestness, 'It could not be mere chance, for that somebody must have contrived matters so as to produce it.' I pretend not to give his words, or my own, for I have forgotten both; but I give the substance of what passed between us in such language as we both understood.—'So you think,' I said, 'that what appears so regular as the letters of your name cannot be by chance.' 'Yes,' said he, with firmness, 'I think so.' 'Look at yourself,' I replied, 'and consider your hands and fingers, your legs and feet, and other limbs; are they not regular in their appearance, and useful to you?' He said, 'they were.' 'Came you then hither,' said I, 'by chance?' 'No,' he answered, 'that cannot be; something must have made me.' 'And who is that something?' I asked. He said, 'he did not know.'

(I took particular notice, that he did not say, as Rousseau fancies a child in like circumstances would say, that his parents made him.) I had now gained the point I aimed at; and saw, that his reason taught him (though he could not so express it) that what begins to be must have an intelligent cause. I therefore told him the name of the Great Being who made him and all the world; concerning whose adorable nature I gave him such information as I thought he could, in some measure, comprehend. The lesson affected him greatly, and he never forgot either it or the circumstance that introduced it."

So great was the docility of this boy, that before he had reached his twentieth year, he had been thought capable of succeeding his father in his office of public professor. When death had extinguished those hopes, the comfort and expectation of the parent were directed to his only surviving child, who, with less application and patience, had yet a quickness of perception that promised to supply the place of those qualities. But this prospect did not continue to cheer him long. In March 1796, the youth was attacked by a fever, which, in seven days, laid him by the side of his brother. He was in his eighteenth year. The sole consolation, with which this world could now supply Beattie, was, that if his sons had lived, he might have seen them a prey to that miserable distemper under which their mother, whose state had rendered a separation from her

family unavoidable, was still labouring. From this total bereavement he sometimes found a short relief in the estrangement of his own mind, which refused to support the recollection of such a load of sorrow. "Many times," says Sir William Forbes, "he could not recollect what had become of his son; and after searching in every room of the house, he would say to his niece, 'Mrs. Glennie, you may think it strange, but I must ask you, if I have a son, and where he is?'" That man must be a stern moralist who would censure him very severely for having sought, as he sometimes did, a renewal of this oblivion in his cups.

He was unable any longer to apply himself to study, and left most of the letters he received from his friends unanswered. Music, in which he had formerly delighted, he could not endure to hear from others, after the loss of his first son; though a few months before the death of the second, he had begun to accompany him when he sang, on his own favourite instrument, which was the violoncello. Afterwards, as may be supposed, the sound of it was painful to him. He still took some pleasure in books, and in the company of a very few amongst his oldest friends. This was his condition till the beginning of April 1799, when he was seized with a paralytic stroke, which rendered his speech imperfect for several days. During the rest of his life he had repeated attacks of the same malady: the last, which happened on the

5th of October, 1802, entirely deprived him of motion. He languished, however, till the 18th of August in the following year, when nature being exhausted, he expired without a struggle.

He was interred, according to his own desire, by the side of his two sons, in the churchyard of St. Nicholas, at Aberdeen, with the following inscription from the pen of Dr. James Gregory, Professor of Physic, at Edinburgh.

Memoriæ. Sacrum.
JACOBI. BEATTIE. LL.D.
Ethices.
In. Academia. Marescallana. hujus. Urbis.
Per. XLIII. Annos.
Professoris. Meritissimi.
Viri.
Pietate. Probitate. Ingenio. atque. Doctrina.
Præstantis.
Scriptoris. Elegantissimi. Poetæ. Suavissimi.
Philosophi. Vere. Christiani.
Natus. est. V. Nov. Anno. MDCCXXXV.
Obiit. XVIII. Aug. MDCCCIII.
Omnibus. Liberis. Orbus.
Quorum. Natu. Maximus. JACOBUS. HAY.
BEATTIE.
Vel. a. Puerilibus. Annis.
Patrio. Vigens. Ingenio.
Novumque. Decus. Jam. Addens. Paterno.
Suis. Carissimus. Patriæ. Flebilis.
Lenta. Tabe. Consumptus. Periit.
Anno. Ætatis. XXIII.
GEO. ET. MAR. GLENNIE.
H. M. P.

"In his person," says Sir William Forbes, "Doctor Beattie was of the middle size, though not elegantly yet not awkwardly formed, but with something of a slouch in his gait. His eyes were black and piercing, with an expression of sensibility somewhat bordering on melancholy; except when engaged in cheerful and social intercourse with his friends, when they were exceedingly animated." In a portrait of him, taken in middle life by Reynolds, and given to him as a mark of his regard by the painter, he is represented with his Essay on Truth under his arm. At a little distance is introduced the allegorical figure of Truth as an angel, holding in one hand a balance, and with the other thrusting back the visages of Prejudice, Scepticism, and Folly.

He is, I believe, the solitary instance of a poet, having received so much countenance at the Court of George the Third; and this favour he owed less to any other cause than to the zeal and ability with which he had been thought to oppose the enemies of religion. The respect with which he was treated, both at home and abroad, was no more than a just tribute to those merits and the excellence of his private character. His probity and disinterestedness, the extreme tenderness with which he acquitted himself of all his domestic duties, his attention to the improvement of his pupils, for whose welfare his solicitude did not cease with their removal from the

college; his unassuming deportment, which had not been altered by prosperity or by the caresses of the learned and the powerful, his gratitude to those from whom he had received favours, his beneficence to the poor, the ardour of his devotion, are dwelt on by his biographer with an earnestness which leaves us no room to doubt the sincerity of the encomium. His chief defect was an irritability of temper in the latter part of his life, which shewed itself principally towards those who differed from him on speculative questions.

In his writings, he is to be considered as a philosopher, a critic, and a poet. His pretensions in philosophy are founded on his Essay on Truth. This book was of much use at its first appearance, as it contained a popular answer to some of the infidel writers, who were then in better odour among the more educated classes of society than happily they now are. If (as I suspect to have been the case) it has prevented men, whose rank and influence make it most desirable that their minds should be raised above the common pitch, from pursuing those studies by which they were most likely so to raise them, the good which it may have done has been balanced by no inconsiderable evil. One can scarcely examine it with much attention, and not perceive that the writer had not ascended to the sources of that science, which notwithstanding any thing he may say to the con-

trary, it was evidently his aim to depreciate. Through great part of it he has the appearance of one who is struggling with some unknown power, which he would fain comprehend, and at which, in the failure to comprehend it, his terror is changed into anger. The word metaphysics, or, as he oftener terms it, metaphysic, crosses him like a ghost. Call it pneumatology, the philosophy of the mind, the philosophy of human nature, or what you will, and he can bear it.

> Take any shape but that, and his firm nerves
> Shall never tremble.

Once, indeed, (but it is not till he has reached the third and last division of the essay) he screws up his courage so high as to question it concerning its name; and the result of his inquiry is this: he finds that to fourteen of the books attributed to Aristotle, which it seems had no general title, Andronicus Rhodius, who edited them, prefixed the words, ta meta ta physica, that is, the books placed posterior to the physics; either because, in the order of the former arrangement they happened to be so placed, or because the editor meant that they should be studied, next after the physics. And this, he concludes, is said to be the origin of the word metaphysic. This is not very satisfactory; and if the reader thinks so, he will perhaps, be glad to hear those who, having dealt longer in the black art, are more likely to be conjurors in it.

Harris, who had given so many years of his life to the study of Aristotle, tells us, that "Metaphysics are properly conversant about primary and internal causes."* "Those things which are first to nature, are not first to man. Nature begins from causes, and thence descends to effects. Human perceptions first open upon effects, and thence by slow degrees ascend to causes."†

His own definition might have been enough to satisfy him that it was something very harmless about which he had so much alarmed himself. Still he proceeds to impute to it I know not what mischief; till at last, in a paroxysm of indignation, he exclaims, "Exult, O metaphysic, at the consummation of thy glories. More thou canst not hope, more thou canst

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* Philosophical Arrangements, c. xvii. p. 409, 8vo. ed.

† Hermes, p. 9, 8vo. ed. The same writer again thus defines the word. "By the most excellent science is meant the science of causes, and, above all others, of causes efficient and final, as these necessarily imply pervading reason and superintending wisdom. This science as men were naturally led to it from the contemplation of effects, which effects were the tribe of beings natural or physical, was, from being thus subsequent to those physical inquiries, called metaphysical; but with a view to itself, and the transcendant eminence of its object, was more properly called ἡ πρώτη φιλοσοφία, the first Philosophy." Three treatises (in a note), p. 365. Ibid.—See also Mr. Coleridge's Friend, vol. i. p. 309.

not desire. Fall down, ye mortals, and acknowledge the stupendous blessing."

About Aristotle himself, he is scarce in less perplexity. He sets out by defining truth according to Aristotle's description of it in these fourteen dreaded books of his metaphysics. Again he tells us, "he is most admired by those who best understand him;" and once more refers us to these fourteen books. But afterwards it would seem as if he had not himself read them; for speaking of *metaphysics*, he calls it that which Aristotle is said to have called theology, and the first philosophy: whereas Aristotle has explicitly called it so in these fourteen books;* and when he is recommending the study of the ancients, he adds; "Of Aristotle, I say nothing. We are assured by those who have read his works, that no one ever understood human nature better than he." What are we to infer from this, but that he had not himself read them? For his distinction between common sense and reason, on which all his theory depends, he sends the reader to the fourth book of Aristotle's Metaphysics, and to the first of his latter Analytics; and yet somewhere else he speaks of these as the most worthless of Aristotle's writings. As for Plato, who on such a subject might have come in for some consideration, we are told that he was as much

* Metaph. I. vi. c. 1.

a rhetorician as a philosopher; and this, I think, is nearly all we hear of him.

Beattie is among the philosophers what the Quaker is among religious sectaries. The κοινὸς νοῦς, or common sense, is the spirit whose illapses he sits down and waits for, and by whose whispers alone he expects to be made wise. It has sometimes prompted him well; for there are admirable passages in the Essay. The whole train of his argument, or rather his invective, in the second part, against the sceptics, is irresistible.

> Scalda ogni fredda lingua ardente voglia,
> E di sterili fa l'alme feconde.
> Ne mai deriva altronde
> Soave finme d'eloquenza rara.—*Celio Magno.*

"What comes from the heart, that alone goes to the heart," says a great writer of our own day;* and there are few instances of this more convincing than the vehemence with which Beattie dissipates the reveries of Berkeley, and refutes the absurdities of Hume.

In the second edition, (1771) speaking of those writers of genius, to whom he would send the student away from the metaphysicians, he confined himself to Shakespeare, Bacon, Montesquieu, and Rousseau. Few will think that other names might

* Mr. Coleridge.

not well have replaced the last of these. In the fourth edition, we find Johnson added to the list. This compliment met with a handsome requital; for Johnson, soon after, having occasion to speak of Beattie, in his Life of Gray, called him a poet, a philosopher, and a good man.

In his Essay, he comforts himself with the belief "that he had enabled every person of common sense to defeat the more important fallacies of the sceptical metaphysicians, even though he should not possess acuteness, or metaphysical knowledge, sufficient to qualify him for a logical refutation of them." It is lamentable to see at how great a cost to himself he had furnished every person of common sense with these weapons of proof. In a letter to Sir William Forbes, written not long after, he makes the following remarkable confession. "How much my mind has been injured by certain speculations, you will partly guess when I tell you a fact that is now unknown to all the world, that since the Essay on Truth was printed in quarto, in the summer of 1776, I have never dared to read it over. I durst not even read the sheets, and see whether there were any errors in the print, and was obliged to get a friend to do that office for me."

As he proceeded, he seems to have become more afraid of the faculty of reason. In the second edition he had said, "Did not our moral feelings,

in concert with what our reason discovers of the Deity, evidence the *necessity* of a future state, *in vain should we pretend* to judge rationally of that revelation by which life and immortality have been brought to light." In the edition of 1776, he softened down this assertion so much, as almost to deprive it of meaning. "Did not our moral feelings, in concert with what reason discovers of the Deity, evidence the *probability* of a future state, and that it is necessary to the full vindication of the divine government, *we should be much less qualified* than we now are to judge rationally of that revelation by which life and immortality have been brought to light." There was surely nothing, except perhaps the word *necessity*, that was objectionable in the proposition as it first stood.

It may be remarked of his prose style in general, that it is not free from that constraint which he, with much candour, admitted was to be found in the writings of his countrymen.

Of his critical works, I have seen only those appended to the edition of his Essay, in 1776. Though not deficient in acuteness, they have not learning or elegance enough to make one desirous of seeing more. His remarks on the characters in Homer are, I think, the best part of them. He sometimes talks of what he probably knew little about; as when he tells us that "he had never been able to discover

anything in Aristophanes that might not be consigned to eternal oblivion, without the least detriment to literature;" that "his wit and humour are now become almost invisible, and seem never to have been very conspicuous;" with more that is equally absurd, to the same purpose.

The few of his poems which he thought worthy of being selected from the rest, and of being delivered to posterity, have many readers, to whom perhaps one recommendation of them is that they are few. They have, however, and deservedly, some admirers of a better stamp. They soothe the mind with indistinct conceptions of something better than is met with in ordinary life. The first book of the Minstrel, the most considerable amongst them, describes with much fervour the enthusiasm of a boy "smit with the love of song," and wakened to a sense of rapture by all that is most grand or lovely in the external appearances of nature. It is evident that the poet had felt much of what he describes, and he therefore makes his hearers feel it. Yet at times, it must be owned, he seems as if he were lashing himself into a state of artificial emotion, as in the following lines:

O! Nature, how in every charm supreme!
Whose votaries feast on raptures ever new!
O! for the voice and fire of seraphim,
To sing thy glories with devotion due!

We hear, indeed, too often of "nature's charms."

Even here he cannot let the metaphysicians rest. They are, in his mind, the grievance that is most to be complained of in this "vale of tears."

There was one other thing that Beattie detested nearly as much as "metaphysic lore." It was the crowing of a cock. This antipathy he contrived to express in the Minstrel, and the reader is startled by the expression of it, as by something out of its place.

Of the stanza beginning, "O, how canst thou renounce," Gray told him that it was, of all others, his favourite; that it was true poetry; that it was inspiration; and, if I am not mistaken, it is related of Bishop Porteus, that when he was once with Beattie, looking down on a magnificent country that lay in prospect before them, he broke out with much delight into the repetition of it. Gray objected to one word, *garniture*, "as suggesting an idea of dress, and what was worse, of French dress;" and the author tried, but tried in vain, to substitute another. It would, perhaps, be impossible to find a better for the place in which it stands. There is no ground of censure which a writer should admit with more caution, than that a particular word or phrase happens to suggest a ludicrous or unsuitable image to the mind of another person. Few probably would have thought of French dress on this

occasion: and to some, a passage in our translation of the Bible might have occurred, where it is said, that "the Lord *garnished* the heavens." Another of Gray's criticisms fell on the word "infuriate," as being a new one, although, as Sir William Forbes remarks, it is found not only in Thomson's Seasons, but in the Paradise Lost.

The second book of the Minstrel is not so pleasant as it is good. The stripling wanders to the habitation of a hermit, who has a harp, not a very usual companion for a hermit, to amuse his solitude; and who directs him what studies to pursue. The youth is pleased with no historian except Plutarch. He reads Homer and Virgil, and learns to mend his song, and the poet would have told us how he learnt to sing still better, if sorrow for the death of a friend had not put a period to his own labours. The poem thus comes abruptly to an end; and we are not much concerned that there is no more of it. His first intention was to have engaged the Minstrel in some adventure of importance, through which it may be doubted whether he could well have conducted him; for he has not shewn much skill in the narrative part of the poem.

The other little piece, called the Hermit, begins with a sweet strain, which always dwells on the ear, and which makes us expect that something equally sweet is to follow. This hermit too has his "harp

symphonious." He makes the same complaint, and finds the same comfort for it, as Edwin had done in the first book of the Minstrel. Both are the Christian's comment on a well-known passage in the Idyllium of Moschus, on the death of Bion. Of his Ode on Lord Hay's Birth-day, Gray's opinion, however favourable, is not much beyond the truth; that the diction is easy and noble; the texture of the thoughts lyric, and the versification harmonious; to which he adds, "that the panegyric has nothing mean in it."

The Ode to Hope looks like one of Blair's Sermons cast into a lyrical mould.

There is, I believe, no allusion to any particular place that was familiar to him, throughout his poems. The description of the owl in the lines entitled Retirement, he used to say, was drawn from nature. It has more that appearance than any thing else he has written, and pleases accordingly.

Between his systems in poetry and philosophy, some exchange might have been made with advantage to each. In the former, he counted general ideas for nearly all in all. (*See his Essay on Poetry and Music*, p. 431.) In the latter, he had not learnt to generalize at all; but would have rested merely in fact and experience.

WILLIAM HAYLEY.

THE most remarkable incidents in Hayley's Life are to be collected from his Memoirs of himself, edited by his friend the Rev. Dr. Johnson, better known as the favourite kinsman of Cowper. The Memoirs, though somewhat more copious than many readers might have wished them, are yet far from being devoid of entertainment to the lovers of literary biography.

William Hayley was born at Chichester, on the 29th of October, 1745. His father was a private gentleman, son of one Dean of Chichester, and nephew to another. Having enriched himself by an union with the daughter of an opulent merchant, who died without leaving him any children, he married for his second wife, Mary, a daughter of Colonel Yates, a representative in Parliament for the city of Chichester, the mother of the poet.

His father dying when he was three years old, and his only brother soon after, William became the sole care of a discreet and affectionate woman. A similar lot will be found to have influenced the earlier years

of many who have been most distinguished for their virtues or abilities in after life. He was taught to read by three sisters, of the name of Russell, who kept a girls' school at Chichester; and pleased himself by relating that, when in his 63rd year, he presented to one of them, who still continued in the same employment with her faculties unimpaired, a recent edition of his Triumphs of Temper. His first instructor in the learned languages was a master in the same city, who appeared to be so incompetent to the task he had undertaken, that Mrs. Hayley removed her son to the school of a Mr. Woodeson, at Kingston. He had not been long here, when he was seized with a violent fit of illness, which obliged his mother, who had now fixed her residence in London, to take him home, after having nursed him for some weeks at Kingston, with little hopes of life. Of the anxiety with which she watched over him, he has left the following pathetic memorial in his Essay on Epic Poetry.

Thou tender saint, to whom he owes much more
Than ever child to parent owed before,
In life's first season, when the fever's flame
Shrunk to deformity his shrivel'd frame,
And turn'd each fairer image in his brain
To blank confusion and her crazy train,
'Twas thine, with constant love, through lingering years,
To bathe thy idiot orphan with thy tears;

Day after day, and night succeeding night,
To turn incessant to the hideous sight,
And frequent watch, if haply at thy view
Departed reason might not dawn anew.

The first sign he gave of returning intellect, was an exclamation on seeing a hare run across the road as they were taking an airing in Richmond park. On his recovery, his mother provided him a private tutor in Greek and Latin, of the name of Ayles, formerly a fellow of King's College, Cambridge; while she herself, and his nurse, a faithful servant in the family for more than fifty years, encouraged his early propensity for English literature; the former by reading to him and the other by making him recite passages out of tragedies, of which the good woman was passionately fond.

In August, 1757, his mother placed him at Eton where he remained about six years, at the end of which time he was removed to Trinity Hall, Cambridge. Like many others, he acknowledges the illusion of considering our school-boy days as the happiest of life. The infirmities, which his sickness had brought on, made him extremely sensible to the jibes and rough treatment of the bigger boys, and the accidental neglect of a Greek lesson exposed him to a flogging which he never quite forgave. One of his tutors at Eton was Dr. Roberts, author of Judah

Restored, a poem, in which the numbers of the Paradise Lost are happily imitated. By him, the young scholar was confirmed in that love of composing verse which he could trace back to his ninth year. There is little promise in the specimens he gives of his earlier attempts. His English ode on the birth of the present King, inserted in the Cambridge collection, is an indifferent performance, even for a boy. At the university, he describes himself to have studied diligently, to have given many of his hours to drawing and painting, and to have formed friendships which were dissolved only by death. On Thornton, a member of the same hall, the most favoured of these associates, whom he lost when a young man, he wrote an elegy, which is one of the best of his works. With him he improved himself in the Spanish and Italian languages, the latter of which they studied under Isola, a teacher at Cambridge, afterwards creditably known by an edition of the Gerusalemme Liberata. Hayley entered his name at the Middle Temple on the 13th of June, 1766, and in the following year quitted Cambridge without a degree. He now made some ineffectual attempts towards fixing his choice of a profession in life; but at last poetry, and especially the drama, were suffered to engross him. In October, 1769, he married Eliza, the daughter of Dr. Ball, Dean of Chichester. This lady had been the confidant of his attachment

to another. The match was on his part entered on rather from disappointment than love; and was made contrary to the advice of his surviving parent, who represented to him the danger there was lest his wife should inherit an incurable insanity under which her mother long laboured. Many years after, he put her away, fancying himself no longer able to endure a waywardness of temper, which, as he thought, amounted nearly to the calamity that had been apprehended. In the summer of 1774, he retired with his wife and mother from Great Queen-street, where they had hitherto resided, to his paternal estate at Eartham in Sussex; but in the ensuing winter his mother went back to London for medical advice and there died.

He had endeavoured, but in vain, to bring several of his tragedies on the stage. Garrick, with some hollow compliments, rejected one, called the Afflicted Father, of which the story appears to have been too shocking for representation. It was that a father had supplied his son, under sentence of death, with poison, and when too late found that he was pardoned. Another called the Syrian Queen, which he had imitated from the Rodogune of Corneille, was refused with more sincerity by Colman. A third met no better reception from Harris. "Persuaded," as he says, "by his own sensations that he had a considerable portion of native poetic fire in his mind, he

resolved to display it in a composition less subject to the caprice of managers, yet more arduous in its execution. In short, he determined to begin an epic poem." He chose for his subject the extorting of Magna Charta from King John. The death of his friend Thornton in 1780, who had watched the progress of this essay with much solicitude for its success, chiefly induced him to relinquish a design, which was in truth ill fitted to his powers. In the Essay on Epic Poetry, he recommended it to Mason, who was not much better able to accomplish it than himself. I am unwilling to detain my reader by an account of the numerous poems, which he either did not complete or did not commit to the press. His unpublished verses, as he told me a few years before his death, amounted to six times the number of those in print.

His first publication was the Epistle on Painting to Romney, in 1778. The two next in the following year were anonymous, the one A Congratulatory Epistle to Admiral Keppel on his Acquittal; the other An Essay on the Ancient Greek Model (as he called it) to Bishop Lowth, remonstrating against the contention which the bishop had entered into with Warburton, and which he thought unworthy so excellent a prelate. In 1780, he produced besides the Verses on the death of Mr. Thornton, an Ode to Howard, and the Epistles on History addressed to Gibbon, which gained him the intimacy of the his-

torian and the philanthropist. The success of these works encouraged him to project the Triumphs of Temper, the most popular of all his poems, which he published in 1781. The next year saw the publication of his Essay on Epic Poetry; in the notes to which he introduced much information on the poetry of Italy and Spain, then less known among us than at present; and he endeavoured to rouse the spirits of Wright the painter at Derby, by an ode, which was printed for private circulation. In 1784, he published a volume of plays, consisting of tragedies and comedies, the latter of which were in rhyme. The gratification of seeing his dramas represented on the stage, which he had before solicited in vain, was now offered by Colman, who proposed through the author's bookseller to bring out a tragedy and comedy, Lord Russell, and The Two Connoisseurs, at the Haymarket. "A comedy in rhyme," the manager observed, "was a bold attempt; but when so well executed as in the present instance, he thought, would be received with favour, especially on a stage of a genius somewhat similar to that of a private theatre for which it was professedly written." Both tragedy and comedy were well received, but with so little emolument to the poet, that he had to pay for his own seat at the representation. Marcella, the other tragedy, was also acted, in 1789, when it was condemned at one house, and in three nights after applauded at the other.

The author accounted for this whimsical change of fortune by supposing the piece to have been played only on a few hours' preparation by the manager at Drury-Lane, in order to get the start of Harris and prevent his success by having the play damned before it appeared on his theatre.

Hayley was, however, now in great favour with the public; the first edition of his plays was sold in a fortnight; and through the intervention of his friend Thomas Payne, the bookseller, he re-purchased for 500*l.* from Dodsley the copyright of all he had written. It would have been well if his poetical career had closed here; for whatever he did afterwards in this way met either with disregard or contempt. Such was the fate of a Poem on the Anniversary of the Revolution in 1788; of an imitation of a German opera, called the Trial of the Rovers, which he sold to Harris for 100*l.* but which failed at Covent-Garden in 1789; of Eudora, a tragedy, acted with no better success in 1790; of the National Advocates, intended to commemorate the triumph of Erksine in his defence of Horne Tooke in 1795; of an Elegy on Sir William Jones in the same year; of an Essay on Sculpture in 1800; of Ballads on Animals, the most empty of his productions that I have seen, in 1802; of the Triumphs of Music in 1804; of Stanzas to the Patriots in Spain in 1808; and of another volume of plays in 1811.

Yet he still continued to secure to himself some share of attention by several works in prose. In the Essay on Old Maids, published in 1785, there is an agreeable combination of learning, sprightliness, and arch humour. He now and then approaches to irreverence on sacred subjects, but, as I am persuaded without any ill intention; the dedication of the book to Mrs. Carter gave much offence to that lady. His Dialogues on Johnson and Chesterfield, in 1787, contrast the character of these writers in a lively manner and with some power of discrimination, but the partiality of the author is very evident. He had himself "sacrificed" too successfully to the Graces to be a fair umpire between the rough scholar and the polished nobleman. The Young Widow, or the History of Cornelia Sedley, a novel, was published without his name (as the last-mentioned two books had also been) in 1789. For this he received 200*l.* from Mr. Nichols. The purchaser found his bargain a hard one: for the novel had little to recommend it, being deficient in probability of incident and character. He made up for the loss by presenting his bookseller with another anonymous work entitled the "Eulogies of Howard, a Vision," in prose.* His "Life of Milton," was intended for an edition of the poet to be published by Nichols the King's printer; but an abridgement of it only was employed in 1794,

* Nichols's Illustrations of Literature, vol. iv. p. 742.

for the purpose, some passages being not thought courtly enough for the royal eye. He afterwards published it without mutilation. The design of this work, to which he devoted two years of diligent application, was to vindicate Milton from the asperity of Johnson—a task, which according to the general opinion, has since been more ably executed by Doctor Symmons. He had, however, reason to be satisfied with this undertaking, as it led to an acquaintance and friendship with Cowper, who was at the same time engaged in writing notes to Milton. Eight years after, it fell to his lot to write a Life of Cowper himself. This proved to him the most lucrative of all his literary engagements; but its success was owing principally not to the narrative but to the private letters of Cowper which accompanied them. Of the Life and Letters he added another volume in 1804; and in 1809 wrote the Life of Romney, which, having no such attraction, did not recommend itself to the public notice.

From the time that he left London, in 1774, till his death, a period of 46 years, he was seldom long absent from his home, first at Eartham, and afterwards at Felpham, a pleasant village on the sea-shore, distant only a few miles from his former residence. Cowper, who visited him at Eartham, in 1792, speaks of the house as "the most elegant mansion he had ever inhabited, surrounded by the most delightful pleasure grounds he had ever seen," and observes

"he had no conception that a poet could be the owner of such a paradise." The house was built, and the pleasure grounds laid out by himself. Here I saw him in the next summer but one after Cowper's visit. His habits appeared to me such as they were long afterwards described by Mrs. Opie—those of extreme retirement, of abstemiousness, and of family devotion. He was at that time employed on his Life of Milton, and in educating his son, a promising boy, who under the age of fourteen, had began to translate the Epistles of Horace into tolerable blank verse. On accompanying me the next morning out of "Paradise," the lad spoke to me with some sorrow of his father's refusal to let him "join a pack of hounds in the neighbourhood." He died in his 20th year, a victim probably to the secluded life and the studious habits to which his parent had so early devoted him. His mother, a servant in the family, as I was told by Anna Seward, declared him to be the son of a young orphan, named Howell, who having been benevolently received by Hayley into his house, and through his means promoted in the military service of the East India Company, soon after perished by shipwreck. But the features of the boy told a different story, and one more consonant to that of the poet, by whom he was always acknowledged for his son. He was, for some time the pupil of Mr. Flaxman, who augured highly of his abilities, and who, if the young

man had lived, would certainly have done all that could be done by example and instruction to render him illustrious in his art and respectable as a man.

Considering his independence on any profession, the ease of his manners, his talents for conversation, and his knowledge of modern languages, it may be wondered that Hayley did not mix more in society, or visit other countries besides his own. Once, indeed, when a young man he made an excursion to Scotland; and, in the summer of 1790, passed three weeks at Paris with his friends, Carwardine and Romney, from whence, much to the scandal of the neighbourhood, he brought back a French governess for his son. Mrs. Hayley had then left him, or rather had been gently forced out of his house; and, afterwards when she begged for leave to return, was denied it. From his own account of the matter, and from the letters that passed between them, some of which he has published in his Memoirs, it is difficult to acquit him of blame, and not to wish that he had endured with more patience the foibles of a woman, who, though irreproachable in her own conduct, was more indulgent than she need have been to his frailties. He appears, however, to have been anxious for her happiness after they were separated. She died in London in 1797, and received from her husband, the empty honours of a funeral sermon and an epitaph. He was loth to

quit his home except on some errand of friendship, when he was ever ready to run to the Land's End. I remember his quoting to me the following line out of Æschylus, on the advantage of a master's presence in his own family.

"Ομμα γὰρ δόμων νομίζω δεσπότου παρουσίαν.

He seems to have taken delight in the instruction of youth; besides his own boy, he undertook to educate gratuitously two sons of his friend, Mr. Carwardine, and one of his neighbour Lord Egremont. On the death of Warton, he declined some advances that were made him through his friends, towards an offer of the laureatship. Nothing but a high sense of independence could have prompted this refusal; for, though no courtier, he was not wanting in loyalty; and the stipend would have been a welcome addition to an income which barely sufficed his own moderate wants and his liberal contributions to the necessities of others.

He was not more fortunate in a second marriage than he had been in his first. The vain confidence which he placed in his good stars on this occasion shall be told in his own words, which are as follows:

While he was deeply engaged in his biographical compositions he used to say, 'I have not leisure to wander from my hermitage, and look into the world in quest of a wife; but I feel a strong persuasion that

if it is really good for me to venture once more on marriage,

that step
Of deepest hazard and of highest hope,

my kind stars will conduct to my cell some compassionate fair one, fond of books and retirement, who may be willing to enliven, with the songs of tenderness, the solitude of a poetical hermit.'

Such was the frame of mind in the recluse when an incident occurred, that gradually seemed to accomplish a completion of his prophecy. This incident was a visit from an old ecclesiastical acquaintance, attended by two young ladies, Mary and Harriet Welford, daughters of an aged and retired merchant on Blackheath.

The countenance and musical talents of the elder sister made a strong impression on the sequestered poet. Their accidental visit gradually led to his second marriage, on the 23d of March 1809, an event attended with much general exultation and delight, though evidently, like the usual steps of poets in the world, rather a step of hasty affection than of deliberate prudence.

In three years they were separated; I know not for what reasons. On shewing me some gaps in his library, he said that they had been made by proceedings in Doctors Commons.

To Felpham where he passed the last twenty

years of his life, there retired also, to end his days in privacy and quiet, Doctor Cyril Jackson, who had been many years Dean of Christ Church, and in that time had refused some of the highest honours in the church. It is said that when Hayley waited on him, the Doctor declined entering upon an interchange of visits; but said that he should be happy to establish an intercourse of a different kind, and to send him occasionally books, or anything else which he might happen to have, and which Hayley might be without, and to receive from him the same neighbourly accommodations in return. Accordingly when the poet took a wife in his old age, he sent the Doctor a piece of the wedding cake, with a message, that he hoped at some future time to receive a neighbourly communication of the same sort in return.

In 1818, he told me that his medical attendant was apprehensive of his becoming dropsical, and had prescribed him a glass of port wine after his dinner. His usual drink before this had been water. In the October of the following year he wrote to me that "he had been assailed by two of the most formidable enemies of the human frame; and had been almost demolished by a fit of apoplexy, and a fit of the stone: the blow from the former," he adds, "was so violent, that my physician despaired of my revival; but, by the mercy of Heaven, I am so far revived, that I can again enjoy a social and literary intercourse

with my friends; and even dabble again in rhyme; but, as I suspect, that my rhymes, like the Homilies of Gil Blas' Archbishop, may savour of apoplexy, I think it right to keep them in utter privacy."

His other complaint the stone, terminated his life on the 12th of November, 1820.

Under all his sufferings (says his early friend, Mr. Sargent), he was never heard to express a querulous word; and if I had not seen it, I could not have thought it possible for so much constant patience and resignation to have been exhibited under so many years of grievous pain. Of his severe disease he spoke with great calmness; and when there seemed to be some doubt among his medical friends, as to the existence of a stone in the bladder, he said to me in a gentle tone, "I can settle the controversy between them; I am sure there is, for I distinctly feel it." A very large stone was found, after his decease. An accidental fall from the slipping of his foot, brought on his last illness and death. When I came to him, the day before he died, he mentioned this circumstance, and expressed a strong hope that God was, in mercy, about to put a period to his sufferings. He had received the Sacrament about a fortnight before, from the Rev. Mr. Hardy, a minister in the neighbourhood, towards whom he always expressed a most friendly regard.

To this satisfactory account of Hayley's latter days, let me be allowed to add, that which is given by the son of his friend, the Rev. John Sargent.

More perfect patience than Hayley manifested under his excruciating tortures, it never was my lot to witness. His was not only submission, but cheerfulness. So far could he abstract himself from his intense sufferings, as to be solicitous, in a way that affected me tenderly, respecting my comfort and accommodation as his guest; a circumstance that might appear trivial to many, but which, to my mind, was illustrative of that disinterestedness and affection which were so habitual to him in life, as not to desert him in death. That his patience emanated from principles far superior to those of manly and philosophical fortitude, I feel a comfortable and confirmed persuasion, not merely from the sentiments he expressed when his end was approaching, but from the more satisfactory testimony of his declarations to his confidential servant in the season of comparative health. Again and again, before his last seizure, did he read over a little book I had given him, Corbett's Self-Examination in Secret, and repeatedly did he make his servant read to him that most valuable little work, of which, surely, no proud and insincere man can cordially approve; and to her did he avow, when recommending it for private perusal, "In the principles of that book I wish to die." He also mentioned to her, at the same time, his approbation of the Rev. Daniel Wilson's Sermons, which had been kindly sent to him. He permitted me frequently to pray with him, as a friend and minister; and when I used the confessional in the communion service of our church, and some of the verses of

the fifty-first psalm, he appeared to unite devoutly in those acts of penitence, and afterwards added, "I thank you heartily."

With emphasis did I hear him utter the memorable words, "I know that my Redeemer liveth, &c." and on my reminding him that Job exclaimed also, "Behold I am vile," he assented to the excellence of that language of repentance and humility. Indeed, I well remember his heartily agreeing with me in an observation I made some months before, "That a progress in religion was to be discerned by a progressive knowledge of our own misery and sinfulness." The last words almost I heard fall from him, contained a sentiment I should wish, living and dying, to be my own—"Christ, have mercy upon me! O my Saviour, look down upon me, forsake me not."

Of his habits during the latter part of his life, Mrs. Opie, who has the art of conferring an interest on whatever she relates, has given this very pleasing account, in a letter addressed to the Editor of his Memoirs. "In consequence of a previous correspondence with Mr. Hayley, the result of his flattering mention of me in the twelfth edition of the "Triumphs of Temper," I went to his house on a visit, in the year 1814. Nothing could exceed the regularity and temperance of Mr. Hayley's habits. We did not breakfast till a little before eight, out of compliment to me I believe; but, as he always rose at

six,* he breakfasted at half-past seven when he was alone; and as soon as he returned from his usual walk in the garden; you remember how rapidly he walked, spite of his lameness, bearing on his stick on one side, and his umbrella on the other.† During

* In a similar sketch from the pen of the Rev. Samuel Greatheed, referring to an earlier period, it is stated that "he usually rose and took a dish of coffee at four A.M," and that "while dressing, he most frequently composed a few stanzas of a devotional turn." This practice of early rising he continued many years after the Editor became acquainted with him, walking in his garden, even in winter, and when the ground was covered with snow, with a lantern in his hand, some hours before daylight; and repeatedly throwing up the sash of his friend's sleeping room, on the ground floor, to give him the benefit of the morning air. *Note by Doctor Johnson.*

† To the best of his recollection, the Editor never saw him abroad without an umbrella; which in fine weather he used as a parasol, to preserve his eyes. He even rode with it on horseback, a very awkward operation, considering the high-spirited animals that composed his stud, and the constitutional malady in his hip-joint, which, in addition to his weight (for he was a remarkably strong-built man), and his never riding without military spurs, reduced his danger of falling almost to a certainty, when he opened his umbrella without due precaution. But he was a stranger to fear in equestrian matters, and always mounted his horse again, as soon as he could be caught. The Editor was once

breakfast, at which he drank cocoa only, he always read; and while I was with him, he read aloud to me. We then adjourned to his sitting room, the upper library, and he read to me, or I to him, till coffee was served in the dining room, which was, I think, at eleven o'clock. That repast over, we walked in the garden, and then returned to our books; or I sang to him till it was time for us to dress for dinner —with him a very temperate meal. He drank water

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riding gently by his side, on the stony beach of Bognor, when the wind suddenly reversing his umbrella, as he unfolded it, his horse, with a sudden but desperate plunge, pitched him on his head in an instant. Providentially he received no hurt, and some fishermen being at hand, the plunging steed was stopped at a gate, and being once more subjected to his rider, took him home in safety. On another occasion, in the same visit of the Editor, he was tost into the air on the Downs, at the precise moment when an interesting friend, whom they had just left, being apprehensive of what would happen, was anxiously viewing him from her window through a telescope.

These anecdotes may serve to illustrate that *determined* feature of his character, which has been already noticed, and which impelled him, contrary to the advice of his friends, to persevere in a favourite, though perilous exercise, even at the manifest hazard of his life. At length, however, they prevailed; and for some years before he died, he gave up riding on horseback altogether. *Note by Dr. Johnson.*

only at dinner, and took coffee instead of wine after it. The coffee was served up with cream and fruit in the upper library.

"After dinner I read to him, or he read to me, till it was near tea-time, when we again walked in the garden, and on our return to the house, cocoa was served for him, and tea for me. After tea I read aloud or sang to him, till nine o'clock, when the servants came in to prayers, which were manuscript compositions, or compilations of his own; and which, as you well know, he read in a very impressive manner. He then conversed for half an hour or I sang one or two of Handel's songs to him, or a hymn of his own; and then we retired for the night. I think he had for some years been in the habit of waking at five o'clock, and composing a hymn, but I do not remember to have heard him mention having been so employed, while I was his guest.

"With the single exception of a drive to Chichester, and to Lavant, where we spent a day with Mrs. Poole, and of having one or two friends to tea three times, there was no *variety* in the life which I have above described, during the whole month I passed with Mr. Hayley; and, I believe, the years that followed, to the time of his death, were as little varied as the days I have detailed. The Honourable Miss Monckton's, and their sister, Mrs. Milnes, drank tea

with us once, as they were very ambitious of being presented to Mr. Hayley, and their conversation and great musical powers were justly appreciated by him.

"The next year I repeated my visit to Felpham, and found the Moncktons at Bognor, with their brother and sister, Viscount and Viscountess Galway. The latter were eager to make Mr. Hayley's acquaintance, and I easily obtained leave to introduce them. At the same time, the Countess of Mayo, and Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Smith, requested of me a similar introduction, and this application drew from our friend the following remark; 'I think, my dear, you had better *show* me at a shilling a-head.' Leave was granted me to present these new visitants; and they afterwards, I found, introduced Lord Mayo. That year Mr. Hayley was unable to bear the motion of a carriage, from the increased pain in his hip-joint, and, from that time he scarcely ever left his own precincts.

"The next year I went to Scotland, and did not see Felpham till the year 1817. I found Mr. Hayley was become fond of seeing occasional visitors, and that Earl and Countess Paulett, and Lady Mary Paulett, as well as Lord and Lady Mayo, and Mr. and Mrs. T. Smith, were frequent callers on him that year. The Miss Godfreys were also his guests

and with them I occasionally paid visits, but for the most part our life was as unvaried as it was in 1814 and 1815.

"In 1818, I was unable to visit Felpham; but in 1819, I went down to Bognor in considerable alarm, on hearing of our poor friend's illness; and I was not certain that I should not arrive too late to see him. But I found him out of danger; and had the happiness of returning to London at the end of the week, leaving him recovering. But I saw him no more. He died in November of the following year.

"You will wish to know what we read aloud. Chiefly manuscript poems and plays of Mr. Hayley's, and modern publications. One of the former was a sensible, just, and, as he read it, an apparently well-written Epistle to a Socinian friend on the errors of his belief. You know, I suppose, that our friend always read the Bible and Testament before he left his chamber in a morning." Hayley's Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 204. The epistle, of which Mrs. Opie speaks, was printed with a few other "Poems on serious and sacred Subjects," to be distributed among the friends of the author, two years before his death.

His person and character are well described by the Rev. Doctor Johnson, in the following words: "He was considerably above the middle stature, had a countenance remarkably expressive of intellect and feeling, and a commanding air and deportment that

reminded the beholder rather of a military officer, than of the character he assumes in the close of his epistolary addresses (he used to sign himself *the Hermit*). The deplorable infirmity, however, of his early years, had left a perceptible lameness, which attended him through life, and induced a necessity of adventitious aid, towards procuring him the advantage of a tolerably even walk.

"As to his personal qualities, of a higher order, these were cheerfulness and sympathy in a very eminent degree; so eminent, indeed, that as no afflictions of his own could divest him of the former, so neither could the afflictions of others find him destitute of the latter. His temper also was singularly sweet and amiable, being not only free from ebullitions of anger, but from all those minor defects which it is needless to enumerate, and to which social peace and harmony are so repeatedly sacrificed. It was the most even in its exercise, that the writer of this brief account of him ever witnessed. Whether this regular flow of good humour was owing to the native cheerfulness of his mind, to the habit which he had contracted of viewing every adverse circumstance on its bright side, to a course of self discipline, which he did not avow to others, or to the joint operation of all these, it is not possible to say; but certain it is that it was one of his most striking peculiarities.

"In all these respects there can be no doubt that the character of Hayley was worthy of imitation; and the Editor feels that he should be deficient in a becoming attention to the expressed wish of the author, in the close of his Memoir, if he did not briefly advert to the importance, both to individual and social happiness, of endeavouring to cultivate to the utmost those eminent ingredients of a beneficial life, cheerfulness, sympathy, and good temper.

"Closely connected with these was a rich assemblage of amiable qualities, which the Editor cannot do better than display in the following extract, from the before-mentioned sketch, by the Rev. Samuel Greatheed. 'Hayley retained, I believe, throughout his life, a high sense of honour, inflexible integrity, a warmth of friendship, and overflowing benevolence. The last was especially exerted for the introduction of meritorious young persons into useful and respectable situations; and it was usually efficient, as it never relaxed while they justified his patronage. He did not, indeed, scruple, while it was in his power, to entrust them with large sums, when there appeared a prospect of their future ability for repayment; but as this prospect not seldom failed, either through death or unavoidable impediments, his property was greatly reduced by such beneficence.

"Another distinctive mark of the character of Hayley, which few possess by nature, and still fewer

attain to by art, was an eminently great conversational ability. It was scarcely possible for any one to be in his company an hour, how distinguished soever his own gifts or acquirements might be in the possession and exercise of colloquial powers, without being conscious of his superiority in this respect. It has been a subject of repeated astonishment to the Editor, that in a soil so unfavourable to the growth of this faculty, as seclusion must necessarily be, it should yet have arrived at such a pitch of exuberance, in the case of the retired subject of this Memoir, as only an interchange of the best informed minds, and that continually exercised, could be supposed capable of producing. He can only attempt to account for it from the opportunities which the author enjoyed, through the advantage of one of the finest private libraries in the kingdom, of conversing at all hours, and in all conceivable frames of mind, with the illustrious dead of every age and nation. But the solution of the difficulty is still incomplete, for although these literary "Pleiades" could furnish as it were "the sweet influences of rain and sunshine," to foster his native talent; yet, breath being denied them, its improvement is more than his friend Cowper could have accounted for, without violating his poetical axiom, that

———Ev'n the oak
Thrives by the rude concussion of the storm.

"As to the defects of the character of Hayley, perhaps the most prominent feature was a pertinacity of determination with regard to his modes of action, which has been seldom exemplified to the same extent in the case of others. When, in the contemplation of supposed advantage, whether to himself or his friends, he had once matured his purpose, it was an attempt of no ordinary difficulty to divert him from the pursuit of it. To this may, perhaps, be attributed the perpetual disappointments with which his life was chequered. Certain it is, that his matrimonial infelicities may be traced to this source. His first adventure of the kind alluded to, had the warning voice of his surviving parent against it, and it may naturally be supposed, the dissuasive arguments of all his thinking and judicious friends. And as to the similar connexion he formed in the decline of life, he must have overcome obstacles both numerous and weighty, with respect to his own situation and habits in accomplishing that object of his wishes. Instead of entering into a detail of these, however, it will be more profitable to secure the good effect that may arise from the contemplation of the former part of his character, from the danger of being neutralized by the present exhibition of it. This may, perhaps, be accomplished by reminding the reader of that principle of our lapsed nature, which inclines us, too often, to confound evil with good. The good, in

Hayley's case, appears to have been the viewing, through his native cheerfulness, every *dispensation of Providence* on its bright side; and the evil, his applying this rule to what might be not improperly designated *the dispensation of his own will.* There can be no doubt that his example in the first instance and his mistake in the last, are equally to be followed and avoided.

"Another failing observable in the character of Hayley, was the little attention he paid to public opinion, in regard to his modes and habits of life. During his long residence in his paternal seat of Eartham, though he occasionally received friends from a distance, and especially the votaries of literature and the fine arts, yet to the families in his vicinity he was not easily accessible. He seems, indeed, to have been almost an insulated mortal among them; and one who, discharging himself from the obligation of what is commonly called *etiquette,* made it impossible to maintain with him the reciprocities of intercourse. It is true, indeed, that the attention of the possessor of Eartham was considerably engrossed by meditation and study; but this increased rather than lessened his adaptation to society, and made the effect of his seclusion the more to be lamented." Hayley's Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 220.

As Hayley was too much extolled at the beginning of his poetical course, so was he undeservedly neg-

lected or ridiculed at the close of it. The excessive admiration he at first met with, joined to that flattering self-opinion which a solitary life is apt to engender, made him too easily satisfied with what he had done. Perhaps he wrote worse after his acquaintance with Cowper; for, aiming at a simplicity which he had not power to support, he became flat and insipid. He had at no time much force of conception or language. Yet if he never elevates he frequently amuses his reader. His chief attraction consists in setting off some plain and natural thought or observation, by a sparkling and ingenious similitude, such as we commonly find in the Persian poets. To this may be added a certain sweetness of numbers peculiar to himself, without the spirit and edge of Pope, or the boldness of Dryden, and fashioned as I think to his own recitation, which though musical, was somewhat too pompous and monotonous. He was desirous that all his rhymes should be exact; but they are sometimes so only according to his own manner of pronouncing them. He holds about the same rank among our poets that Bertaut does among the French; but differs from him in this; that, whereas Bertaut was the earliest of a race analogous to the school of Dryden and Pope, so Hayley was the latest of the correspondent class amongst ourselves.

In one respect he is deserving of most honourable notice. During the course of a long literary life, I

doubt whether he was ever provoked to use a single word of asperity or sarcasm towards any of his contemporaries. This was praise which alone ought to have exempted him from the harsh and unmerited censure of Porson, by whom he was called Criticorum et Poetarum pessimus. He sometimes on the other hand, indulged himself too much in a lavish and indiscriminate commendation of contemporary writers. But from whatever might appear like flattery of the great, he scrupulously abstained. When the Princess Charlotte visited him at Felpham, he would not present some verses he had written on her, lest he should be thought capable of that meanness.

His Essays on Painting, History, and Poetry, contain much information that may be useful to young artists and students. That on Sculpture is very inferior to the rest; as the Triumph of Music is to the Triumphs of Temper. The last of these is a poem that still continues to interest a class of readers, whose studies are intimately connected with the happiness and well being of society. The design of it, which is to shew the advantages of self-control to the mind of a well-educated girl, is much to be commended. The machinery though it required no great effort in the production, yet suffices to give some relief to the story. It has been remarked that the trials of the Heroine are too insignificant. But of one of them, at least, the calumny in the newspaper,

this cannot properly be said. Nor would the purpose of the writer have been so well answered, if he had been more serious, and had uttered his oracles from behind a graver mask.

The taste which has been lately excited amongst us for Spanish and Italian literature, after having slept nearly since the age of Elizabeth, may be attributed in a great measure to the influence of his example. Gray, Hurd, and the two Wartons, had done something towards awakening it, but the spell was completed by him. The decisive impulse was given by the copious extracts from the great poets in those languages, which he inserted in the notes to his Essay on Epic Poetry, and which he accompanied by spirited translations. Lord Holland, the best informed and most elegant of our writers on the subject of the Spanish theatre, declared that he had been induced to learn that language by what Hayley had written concerning the poet Ercilla.

I have heard his Greek scholarship questioned in consequence of an error which, in his Epistles on History, he has made in the quantity of the word Olorus, the name of the father of Thucydides; but from a casual mistake of this sort, no decisive inference can be drawn.

There is little knowledge of human life and character to be gained from his writings. He had seen man-

kind chiefly through the medium of books, and those such as did not represent them very faithfully to him, that is, in ordinary plays and novels. Indeed he appeared to consider the real affairs of life in which he was concerned much in the light of a romance, and himself and his friends as so many personages acting in it, all meeting with marvellous adventures at every turn, and all endowed with admirable qualities, to which their petty frailties served only as foils. It is impossible in reading his memoirs to avoid smiling at the importance he attaches to very ordinary occurrences. I am not sure whether it was not this propensity that led him to magnify his own distresses in living with his first wife. That lady I well recollect to have been lively and elegant in her manners, and much addicted to literary pursuits, of which she gave a proof in translating Madame de Lambert's Essay on Friendship. Her excessive zeal for her husband's reputation as an author, he has bantered with some humour in the play of the Mausoleum, where Mrs. Rumble, the wife of a poet is introduced:

Who crows o'er her husband's poetical eggs.

The character of Rumble in the same play appeared so evidently designed for Johnson, though the author disclaimed that intention, that Boswell, when he read it on its first coming out, at Anna Seward's, exclaimed, "It is we. It is we." Trope, who

Talks in a high strutting style of the stars,
Of the eagle of Jove, and the chariot of Mars,

was meant for Mason; and by Facil,

Whose verse is the thread of tenuity,
A fellow distinguish'd by flippant fatuity,
Who nonsense and rhyme can incessantly mingle,
A poet—if poetry's only a jingle,

he intended to represent himself.

The name of Facil was but too appropriate. The slender thread of his verse was hastily and slightly spun.

His comedies are adapted to the entertainment of those readers only who have formed their taste on the French drama. His tragedies are some of the most endurable we have in what a lively modern critic* has termed the rhetorical style. Yet he had some skill in moving compassion.

His diction, both in poetry and prose, is vitiated by the frequent recurrence of certain hyperbolical expressions, which he applies on almost all occasions.

He was particularly fond of composing epitaphs, of which, as I remember, he shewed me a manuscript book full. One of these on Henry Hammond, the parish clerk at Eartham, is among the best in the language. It is inserted in the Memoirs which Hayley wrote of his son.

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* My friend Mr. Darley, *MS. addition.*—Ed.

An active spirit in a little frame,
This honest man the path of duty trod;
Toil'd while he could, and, when death's darkness came,
Sought in calm hope his recompense from God.
His sons, who loved him, to his merit just,
Raised this plain stone to guard their parent's dust.

SIR WILLIAM JONES.

THE life of Sir William Jones has been written by his friend Lord Teignmouth with that minuteness which the character of so illustrious and extraordinary a man deserved. He was born in London, on the twenty-eighth of September, 1746. His father, whose Christian name he bore, although sprung immediately from a race of yeomen in Anglesea, could yet, like many a Cambro-Briton beside, have traced his descent, at least in a maternal line, from the ancient princes of Wales. But what distinguished him much more was, that he had attained so great a proficiency in the study of mathematics as to become a teacher of that branch of science in the English metropolis, under the patronage of Sir Isaac Newton, and rose to such reputation by his writings, that he attracted the notice and esteem of the powerful and the learned, and was admitted to the intimacy of the Earls of Hardwicke, and Mac-

clesfield ; Lord Parker, President of the Royal Society; Halley ; Mead ; and Samuel Johnson. By his wife, Mary, the daughter of a cabinet-maker in London, he had two sons, one of whom died an infant, and a daughter. In three years after the birth of the remaining son, the father himself died, and left the two children to the protection of their mother. An extraordinary mark of her presence of mind, sufficiently indicated how capable this mother was of executing the difficult duty imposed on her by his decease. Dr. Mead had pronounced his case, which was a polypus on the heart, to be a hopeless one ; and her anxious precautions to hinder the fatal intelligence from reaching him were on the point of being defeated by the arrival of a letter of condolence and consolation from an injudicious but well-meaning friend, when, on discovering its purport, she had sufficient address to substitute the lively dictates of her own invention for the real contents of the epistle, and by this affectionate delusion not merely to satisfy the curiosity but to cheer the spirits of her dying husband.

So great was her solicitude for the improvement of her son, that she declined the pressing instances of the Countess of Macclesfield to reside under her roof, lest she should be hindered from attending exclusively to that which was now become her main concern. To the many inquiries which the early

vivacity of the boy prompted him to put to her, the invariable answer she returned was, *read and you will know*. This assurance, added to the other means of instruction, from which her fondness, or more probably her discernment, induced her to exclude every species of severity, were so efficacious that in his fourth year he was able to read at sight any book in his own language. Two accidents occurred to hinder this rapid advancement from proceeding. Once he narrowly escaped being consumed by flames from having fallen into the fire, while endeavouring to scrape down some soot from the chimney of a room in which he had been left alone; and was rescued only in consequence of the alarm given to the servants by his shrieks. At another time, his eye was nearly put out by one of the hooks of his dress, as he was struggling under the hands of the domestic who was putting on his clothes. From the effects of this injury his sight never completely recovered.

In his fifth year he received a strong impression from reading the twentieth chapter of the Apocalypse. The man must have a cold imagination who would deny that this casual influence might have first disclosed not only the lofty and ardent spirit, but even that insatiable love of learning, by which he was afterwards distinguished above all his contemporaries. Amidst the general proscription of reading

adapted to excite wonder, that germ of knowledge, in the minds of our children, it is lucky that the Bible is still left them.

At the end of his seventh year he was placed under the tuition of Dr. Thackeray, the master of Harrow school; but had not been there two years before a fracture of his thigh bone, that happened in a scramble among his play-fellows, occasioned another suspension of his studies. During the twelvemonth which he now passed at home with his mother, he became so conversant with several writers in his own language, especially Dryden and Pope, that he set himself about making imitations of them.

On his return to Harrow, no allowance was made for the inevitable consequences of this interruption; he was replaced in the class with those boys whose classical learning had been progressive while his was stationary, or rather retrograde, and unmerited chastisement was inflicted on him for his inferiority to those with whom he had wanted the means of maintaining an equality. Impelled either by fear, by shame, or by emulation, he laboured hard in private to repair his losses: of his own accord recurred to the rudiments of the grammar; and was so diligent that he speedily outstripped all his juvenile competitors.

In his twelfth year he entered into a scheme for representing a play in conjunction with his school-fellows; but instead of seeking his Dramatis Per-

sonæ among the heroes of Homer, as Pope had done in his boyhood, Jones, by a remarkable effort of memory, committed to paper what he retained of Shakspeare's Tempest, which he had read at his mother's; and himself sustained the part of Prospero in that Comedy. Meanwhile, his poetical faculty did not lie dormant. He turned into English verse all Virgil's Eclogues and several of Ovid's Epistles; and wrote a Tragedy on the fable of Meleager, which was acted during the holidays by himself and his comrades, and in which he sustained the character of the hero. A short specimen of the drama is preserved. The language brings to our recollection that of the Mock Tragedy in Hamlet.

When the other boys were at their sports, Jones continued to linger over his book, or, if he mingled in their diversions, his favourite objects were still uppermost in his thoughts; he directed his playmates to divide the fields into compartments to which he gave the names of the several Grecian republics; allotted to each their political station; and "wielding at will the fierce democracies," arranged the complicated concerns of peace and war, attack and defence, councils, harangues, and negociations. Dr. Thackeray was compelled to own that "if his pupil were left naked and friendless on Salisbury plain, he would yet find his way to fame and riches."

On the resignation of that master, the manage-

ment of the school devolved on Dr. Sumner, by whom Jones, then in his fifteenth year, was particularly distinguished. Such was his zeal, that he devoted whole nights to study; and not contented with applying himself at school to the classical languages, and during the vacations to the Italian and French, he attained Hebrew enough to enable him to read the Psalms in the original, and made himself acquainted with the Arabic character. Strangers, who visited Harrow, frequently inquired for him by the appellation of the great scholar.

Some of his compositions from this time to his twentieth year, which he collected and entitled Limon,* in imitation of the ancients, are printed among his works. A young scholar who should now glance his eye over the first chapter, containing speeches from Shakspeare and Addison's Cato translated into Greek iambics on the model of the Three Tragedians, would put aside the remainder with a smile of complacency at the improvement which has since been made in this species of task under the auspices of Porson.

His mother was urged by several of the legal profession, who interested themselves in his welfare, to place him in the office of a special pleader: but considerations of prudence, which represented to her that the course of education necessary to qualify

* Λειμὼν, a meadow.

him for the practice of the law was exceedingly expensive and the advantages remote, hindered her from acquiescing in their recommendation; at the same time that his own inclination and the earnest wishes of his master concurred in favour of prosecuting his studies at college. Which of the two universities should have the credit of perfecting instruction thus auspiciously commenced was the next subject of debate. But the advice of Dr. Glasse, then a private tutor at Harrow, prevailing over that of the head master, who, by a natural partiality for the place of his own education would have given the preference to Cambridge, he was in 1764 admitted of University College in Oxford, whither his mother determined to remove her residence, either for the purpose of superintending his health and morals, or of enjoying the society of so excellent a son.

Before quitting school he presented to his friend Parnell, nephew of the poet, and afterwards Chancellor of the Exchequer in Ireland, a manuscript volume of English verses, consisting, among other pieces, of that essay which some years after he moulded into his Arcadia; and of translations from Sophocles, Theocritus, and Horace. If the encouragement of Dr. Sumner had not been overruled by the dissuasion of his more cautious friends, he would have committed to the press his Greek and Latin compositions, among which was a Comedy in imitation of the style of Aristophanes, entitled Mormo.

Like many other lads whose talents have unfolded in all their luxuriance under the kindness of an indulgent master, he experienced a sudden chill at his first transplantation into academic soil. His reason was perplexed amid the intricacies of the school logic, and his taste revolted by the barbarous language that enveloped it.

On the 31st of October he was unanimously elected to one of the four scholarships founded by Sir Simon Bennet. But as he had three seniors, his prospect of a fellowship was distant; and he was anxious to free his mother from the inconvenience of contributing to his support. His disgust for the University, however, was fortunately not of long continuance. The college tutors relieved him from an useless and irksome attendance on their lectures, and judiciously left the employment of his time at his own disposal. He turned it to a good account in perusing the principal Greek historians and poets, together with the whole of Lucian and of Plato; writing notes, and exercising himself in imitations of his favourite authors as he went on. In order to facilitate his acquisition of the Arabic tongue, more particularly with regard to its pronunciation, he engaged a native of Aleppo, named Mirza, whom he met with in London, to accompany him to Oxford, and employed him in re-translating the Arabian Nights' Entertainments into their original language, whilst he wrote out the

version himself as the other dictated, and corrected the inaccuracies by the help of a grammar and lexicon. The affinity which he discovered between this language and the modern Persian, induced him to extend his researches to the latter dialect; and he thus laid the foundation of his extraordinary knowledge in oriental literature.

During the vacations he usually resorted to London, where he was assiduous in his attendance on the schools of Angelo, for the sake of accomplishing himself in the manly exercises of fencing and riding; and, at home, directed his attention to modern languages; and familiarised himself with the best writers in Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese: "thus," he observed, "with the fortune of a peasant, he gave himself the education of a prince."

The year after his entrance at college, he accepted a proposal that was made him to undertake the education of Lord Althorpe, then a child about seven years old; and for that purpose spent much of his time at Wimbledon, where he composed many of his English poems, and studied attentively the Hebrew Bible, particularly the prophetical writings, and the book of Job.

In the summer of 1766, a fellowship of University College unexpectedly became vacant; and being conferred on Jones, secured him the enjoyment of that independence which he had so much desired.

With independence he seems to have been satisfied; for, on his return to Wimbledon, he declined an offer made him by the Duke of Grafton, then first Lord of the Treasury, of the place of interpreter for eastern languages. The same answer which conveyed his refusal recommended in earnest terms his friend Mirza as one fitted to perform the duties of the office, but the application remained unnoticed; and he regretted that his inexperience in such matters had prevented him from adopting the expedient of nominally accepting the employment for himself, and consigning the profits of it to the Syrian.

In 1767 he began his treatise De Poesi Asiatica, on the plan of Lowth's Prælectiones, and composed a Persian grammar for the use of a school-fellow, who was about to go to India. His usual course of study was for a short time interrupted by an attendance on Earl Spencer, the father of his pupil, to Spa. The ardour of his curiosity as a linguist made him gladly seize the opportunity afforded him by this expedition of obtaining some knowledge of German. Nor was he so indifferent to slighter accomplishments as not to avail himself of the instructions of a celebrated dancing master at Aix-la-Chapelle. He had before taken lessons from Gallini in that trifling art. From a pensioner at Chelsea he had learnt the use of the broadsword. He afterwards made an attempt, in which, however, he does not seem to have persevered,

to become a performer on the national instrument of his forefathers, the harp. Ambition of such various attainments reminds us of what is related concerning the Admirable Crichton, and Pico of Mirandola.

Christian the Seventh, King of Denmark, who in 1768 was on a visit to this country, had brought with him a Persian history of Nadir Shah in manuscript, which he was desirous to have translated from that language into the French. On this occasion Jones was applied to by one of the under secretaries to the Duke of Grafton, to gratify the wishes of the Danish monarch. The task was so little to his mind that he would have excused himself from engaging in it; and he accordingly suggested Major Dow, a gentleman already distinguished by his translations from the Persic, as one fit to be employed; but he likewise pleading his other numerous occupations as a reason for not undertaking this, and the application to Jones being renewed, with an intimation that it would be disgraceful to the country if the King should be compelled to take the manuscript into France, he was at length stimulated to a compliance. At the expiration of a twelvemonth, during which interval it had been more than once eagerly demanded, the work was accomplished. The publication of it was completed in 1770, and forty copies were transmitted to the court of Denmark. To the History was appended a treatise on Oriental poetry, written also in French.

One of the chief difficulties imposed on the translator had been the necessity of using that language in the version, of which it could not be expected that he should possess an entire command; but to obviate this inconvenience, he called in the aid of a Frenchman, who corrected the inaccuracies in the diction. Christian expressed himself well satisfied with the manner in which his intentions had been fulfilled: but a diploma constituting the translator a member of the Royal Society at Copenhagen, together with an earnest recommendation of him to the regard of his own sovereign, were the sole rewards of his labour. Of the history he afterwards published an abridgment in English.

The predilection he had conceived for the Muses of the East, whom, with the blind idolatry of a lover, he exalted above those of Greece and Rome, was further strengthened by his intercourse with an illustrious foreigner, whom they had almost as much captivated. The person, with whom this similarity of taste connected him, was Charles Reviczki, afterwards imperial minister at Warsaw, and ambassador at the English court with the title of Count. Their correspondence, which turns principally on the object of their common pursuits, and is written in the French and Latin languages, commenced in 1768. At this time he took his degree of Bachelor of Arts.

In the summer of the ensuing year, Jones accom-

panied his pupil to the school at Harrow. During his residence there he transcribed his Persian grammar. He had already begun a dictionary of that language, with illustrations of the principal words from celebrated writers, a work of vast labour, which he resolved not to prosecute without the assurance of an adequate remuneration from the East India Company.

At the entreaty of Dr. Glasse, he now dedicated some portion of his time to religious inquiry. The result was a conviction of the truth of Christianity, in his belief of which, it is said, he had hitherto been unconfirmed. In the winter he made a second visit to the Continent with the family of his noble patron. After a longer stay at Paris, than was agreeable to him, they passed down the Rhine to Lyons, and thence proceeded by Marseilles, Frejus, and Antibes, to Nice. At the last of these places they resided long enough to allow of his returning to his studies, which were divided between the arts of music and painting; the mathematics; and military tactics; a science of which he thought no Briton could, without disgrace, be ignorant. He also wrote a treatise on education; and begun a tragedy entitled Soliman, on the murder of the son of that monarch by the treachery of his step-mother. Of the latter, although it appears from one of his letters that he had com pleted it, no traces were found among his papers, except a prefatory discourse too unfinished to

meet the public eye. The subject has been treated by Champfort, a late French writer, and one of the best among Racine's school, in a play called Mustapha and Zeangir. I do not recollect, and have not now the means of ascertaining, whether that fine drama, the Solimano of Prospero Bonarelli is founded on the same tragic incident in the Turkish History.

An excursion which he had meditated to Florence, Rome, and Naples, he was under the necessity of postponing to a future occasion. On his way back he diverged to Geneva, in hopes of seeing Voltaire; but was disappointed, as the Frenchman excused himself, on account of age and sickness, from conversing with a stranger. At Paris he succeeded by the help of some previous knowledge of the Chinese character, and by means of Couplet's Version of the Works of Confucius, in construing a poem by that writer, from a selection in the king's library, and sent a literal version of it to his friend Reviczki. From the French capital the party returned through Spa to England. During their short residence at Spa he sketched the plan of an epic poem, on the discovery of Britain by the Prince of Tyre. The suggestion and advice of his friends, who thought that abilities and attainments like his required a more extensive sphere of action than was afforded him by the discharge of his duties as a private tutor, strengthened, probably, by a consciousness of his own power, induced him to relinquish

that employment, and henceforward to apply himself to the study and practice of the law. An almost enthusiastic admiration of the legal institutions of his own country, a pure and ardent zeal for civil liberty, and an eminent independence and uprightness of mind, were qualifications that rendered this destination of his talents not less desirable in a public view, than it was with reference to his individual interests. He accordingly entered himself a member of the Temple, on the 19th of September, 1770. To faculties of so comprehensive a grasp, the abandonment of his philological researches was not indispensable for the successful prosecution of his new pursuit. Variety was perhaps even a necessary aliment of his active mind, which without it might have drooped and languished. Indeed, the cultivation of eastern learning eventually proved of singular service to him in his juridical capacity.

In 1771 he published in French a pamphlet in answer to Anquetil du Perron's Attack on the University of Oxford, in the discourse prefixed to his "Zind-Avesta;" and entered on "A History of the Turks," the introduction to which was printed, but not made public till after his death. He had a design to apply for the office of minister at Constantinople, in the event of a termination of the war with Russia, and looked forward with eagerness to an opportunity of contemplating the Turkish manners at their source.

A small volume of his poems, consisting chiefly of translations from the Eastern languages, with two prose dissertations annexed, made their appearance in the following year, when he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society. From the preface to the poems, it appears that his relish for the Greek and Roman writers had now returned; and that he justly regarded them as the standard of true taste. His terms not having been regularly kept in the University, (where his mother and sister had still continued to reside) he did not take his degree of Master of Arts till the Easter of 1773. In the January following he was called to the bar. At the conclusion of the preface to his Commentaries de Poesi Asiatica, published at this period, he announces his determination to quit the service of the muses, and apply himself entirely to his professional studies. In a letter to Reviczki, of February, 1775, we find him declaring that he no longer intended to solicit the embassy to Constantinople. This year he attended the spring circuit, and sessions at Oxford; and the next was appointed one of the commissioners of bankrupts, and was to be found regularly as a legal practitioner in Westminster Hall. At the same time, that he might not lose sight of classical literature, he was assiduous in his perusal of the Grecian orators, and employed himself in a version of the Orations of Isæus; nor does he appear to have broken off his

correspondence with learned foreigners, among whom were the youngest Schultens, and G. S. Michaelis. The translation of Isæus, which appears to be executed with fidelity, was published in 1778, with a dedication to Lord Bathurst, in which he declares "his Lordship to have been his greatest, his only benefactor." His late appointment is the obligation to which he refers.

A vacancy had now occurred on the bench at Fort William, in Bengal; and Jones was regarded by his brethren at the bar as the fittest person to occupy that station. The patronage of the minister, however, was requisite to this office; and the violent measures which government had lately adopted, with respect to the American Colonies, were far from being such as accorded with his notions of freedom and justice. He was resolved that no consideration should induce him to surrender the independence of his judgment on this, or any other national topic. "If the minister," says he, in one of his letters to his pupil, Lord Althorpe, "be offended at the style in which I have spoken, do speak, and will speak, of public affairs, and on that account, shall refuse to give me the judgeship, I shall not be at all mortified, having already a very decent competence without a debt, or a care of any kind." His patriotic feelings displayed themselves in a Latin Ode to Liberty; published in March, 1780, under the title of Julii Mele-

sigoni ad Libertatem, an assumed name, formed by an anagram of his own in Latin.

The resignation of Sir Robert Newdigate, one of the members returned to parliament for the University of Oxford, in the meantime, induced several members of that learned body, who were friendly to Jones, to turn their eyes towards him as their future representative. The choice of a candidate undistinguished by birth or riches, and recommended solely by his integrity, talents, and learning, would have reflected the highest honour on his constituents; but many being found to be disinclined to his interest, it was thought more prudent to relinquish the canvass. He published in July a small pamphlet, entitled an Inquiry into the Legal Mode of suppressing Riots, with a constitutional Plan of future Defence. The insurrection which had for some days disgraced the British metropolis, at the beginning of June, suggested the publication of this tract. In the autumn of this year he made a journey to Paris, as he had done the preceding summer. During a fortnight's residence in that capital, he attended some causes at the Palais; obtained access to a fine manuscript in the royal library, which opened to him a nearer insight into the manners of the ancient Arabians; and mingled in the society of as many of the American leaders as he could fall in with, purposing to collect materials for a future history of their unhappy contest with the

mother country. In the midst of this keen pursuit of professional and literary eminence he had the misfortune to lose his mother, who had lived long enough to see her tenderness and assiduity in the conduct of his education amply rewarded.

An Essay on the Law of Bailments, and the translation of an Arabian Poem, on the Mohammedan Law of Succession to the Property of Intestates, to the latter of which undertakings he was incited by his views of preferment in the East, testified his industry in the pursuit of his legal studies; while, on the other hand, several short poems evinced, from time to time, his intended relinquishment of the tuneful art to be either impracticable or unnecessary.

In the summer of 1782 the interests of one of his clients led him again to Paris, from whence he returned by the circuitous route of Normandy, and the United Provinces. In the spring of this year he had become a member of the Society for Constitutional Information. A more equal representation of the people in parliament was at this time the subject of general discussion, and he did not fail to stand forward as the strenuous champion of a measure which seemed likely to infuse new spirit and vigour into our constitutional liberties. His sentiments were publicly professed in a speech before the meeting assembled at the London Tavern, on the 28th of May; and he afterwards gave a wider currency to them from the

press. He maintained that the representation ought to be nearly equal and universal; an opinion in which few would now be found to coincide; and which, if he had lived a little longer, he would probably himself have acknowledged to be erroneous. At Paris, he had written a Dialogue between a Farmer and a Country Gentleman on the Principles of Government, and it was published by the Society. A bill of indictment was found against the Dean of St. Asaph, whose sister he afterwards married, for an edition printed in Wales; and Jones avowed himself the author.

In the beginning of 1783 appeared his translation of the seven Arabian poems, suspended in the temple at Mecca about the commencement of the sixth century.

In the March of this year, he was gratified by the long desired appointment to the office of judge in the supreme court of judicature, at Fort William, in Bengal, which was obtained for him through the interest of Lord Ashburton; and he received the honour of knighthood usually conferred on that occasion. The divisions among his political friends, after the decease of that excellent nobleman, the Marquis of Rockingham, afforded him an additional motive for wishing to be employed at a distance from his country, which he no longer hoped to see benefited by their exertions. He was immediately afterwards

united to Anna Maria Shipley, the daughter of the Bishop of St. Asaph, a learned and liberal prelate. His attachment to this lady had been of long continuance, and he had been waiting only for an honourable independence before he could resolve to join the fortunes of one so tenderly beloved to his own.

Sir William Jones embarked for the East in April, 1783. It is impossible not to sympathise with the feelings of a scholar about to visit places over which his studies had thrown the charm of a mysterious interest; to explore treasures that had rested as yet in darkness to European eyes; and to approach the imagined cradle of human science and art. During his voyage he made the following memoranda of objects for his inquiry, and of works to be begun or executed during his residence in Asia.

1. The laws of the Hindus and Mahommedans.
2. The History of the Ancient World.
3. Proofs and Illustrations of Scripture.
4. Traditions concerning the Deluge, &c.
5. Modern Politics, and Geography of Hindustan.
6. Best Mode of Governing Bengal.
7. Arithmetic and Geometry, and Mixed Sciences of the Asiatics.
8. Medicine, Chemistry, Surgery, and Anatomy, of the Indians.
9. Natural Productions of India.
10. Poetry, Rhetoric, and Morality of Asia
11. Music of the Eastern Nations.

12. The Shi-King, or 300 Chinese Odes.

13. The best Accounts of Thibet and Cashmir.

14. Trade, Manufactures, Agriculture, and Commerce of India.

15. Mogul Constitution contained in the Defteri Alemghiri, and Ayein Acbari.

16. Mahratta Constitution.

To print and publish the Gospel of St. Luke, in Arabic.

To publish Law Tracts, in Persian or Arabic.

To print and publish the Psalms of David, in Persian Verse.

To compose, if God grant me life,

1. Elements of the Laws of England.
   Model—the Essay on Bailment. Aristotle.
2. The History of the American War.
   Model—Thucydides and Polybius.
3. Britain Discovered, an Heroic Poem on the Constitution of England.
   Machinery. Hindu Gods.
   Model—Homer.
4. Speeches, Political and Forensic.
   Model—Demosthenes.
5. Dialogues, Philosophical and Historical.
   Model—Plato.
6. Letters.
   Model—Demosthenes and Plato.

In the course of the voyage the vessel touched at

Madeira; and in ten weeks after quitting Cape Verd Islands arrived at that of Hinzuan or Joanna, of which he has left a very lively and pleasing description.

In September he landed at Calcutta; and before the conclusion of the year, entered on the performance of his judicial function, and delivered his first charge to the grand jury, on the opening of the sessions. This address was such as not to disappoint the high expectations that had been formed of him before his arrival.

It was evident that the leisure, or perhaps even the undivided attention and labour of no one man, could have sufficed for prosecuting researches so extensive and arduous as those he had marked out for himself. The association of others in this design was the obvious method of remedying the difficulty. At his suggestion, accordingly, an institution was, in January, 1784, framed as closely as possible on the model of the Royal Society in London; and the presidency was offered to Mr. Hastings, then Governor-general in India, who not only was a liberal encourager of Persian and Sanscrit literature, but had made himself a proficient in the former of these languages at a time when its importance had not been duly appreciated; and was familiarly versed in the common dialects of Bengal. That gentleman, however, declining the honour, and recommending that it should be conferred

on the proposer of the scheme, he was consequently elected president. The names of Chambers, Gladwyn, Hamilton, and Wilkins, among others, evince that it was not difficult for him to find coadjutors. How well the institution has answered the ends for which it was formed the public has seen in the Asiatic Researches.

A thorough acquaintance with the religion and literature of India appeared to be attainable through no other medium than a knowledge of the Sanscrit; and he therefore applied himself without delay to the acquisition of that language. It was not long before he found that his health would oblige him to some restriction in the intended prosecution of his studies. In a letter written a few days after his arrival in India, he informs one of his friends that "as long as he stays in India, he does not expect to be free from a bad digestion, the morbus literatorum; for which there is hardly any remedy but abstinence from too much food, literary and culinary. I rise," he adds, "before the sun, and bathe after a gentle ride; my diet is light and sparing, and I go early to rest; yet the activity of my mind is too strong for my constitution, though naturally not infirm; and I must be satisfied with a valetudinarian state of health." All these precautions, however, did not avail to secure him from violent and reiterated attacks. In 1784, he travelled to the city of Benares, by the route of

Guyah, celebrated as the birth-place of the philosopher Boudh, and the resort of Hindu pilgrims from all parts of the East; and returned by Gour, formerly the residence of the sovereigns of Bengal. During this journey he laboured for some time under a fit of illness that had nearly terminated his life. Yet no sooner did he become a convalescent than he applied himself to the study of botany, and composed a metrical tale, entitled The Enchanted Fruit, or Hindu Wife; and a Treatise on the Gods of Greece, Italy, and India; the latter of which he communicated to the Society. He had not been many months settled after his return to Calcutta, when he found the demand made on him for his company, by the neighbourhood of that place, so frequent as to produce a troublesome interruption to the course of his literary engagements. He therefore looked out for a situation more secluded, to which he might betake himself during the temporary cessations of his official duties; and made choice of Chrishnanagur, at the distance of about fifty miles, which, besides a dry soil and pure air, possessed an additional recommendation in its vicinity to a Hindu College. Indeed, he omitted no means that could tend to facilitate his acquaintance with the learning and manners of the natives. A considerable portion of his income was set aside for the purpose of supporting their scholars, whom he engaged for his instruction.

The administration of justice was frequently interrupted by the want of integrity in the Pundits, or expounders of the statutes. To prevent the possibility of such deception, this upright magistrate undertook to compile and translate a body of Hindu and Mohammedan laws, and to form a digest of them in imitation of that of the Roman law framed by the order of the Emperor Justinian. The mind can scarcely contemplate a plan of utility more vast or splendid than one which aimed at preserving the fountain of right uncontaminated for twenty millions of people. During the period of sessions and term, when his attendance was required at Calcutta, he usually resided on the banks of the Ganges, five miles from the court.

In 1785 a periodical work, called the Asiatic Miscellany, which has been erroneously attributed to the Asiatic Society, was undertaken at Calcutta; and to the first two volumes, which appeared in that and the following year, he contributed six hymns addressed to Hindu deities; a literal version of twenty tales and fables of Nizami, expressly designed for the help of students in the Persian language; and several smaller pieces.

A resolution, which had passed the Board of the Executive Government of Bengal, for altering the mode of paying the salaries of the judges, produced from him a very spirited remonstrance. The affair,

however, seems to have been misconceived by himself and his brethren on the Bench; and on its being explained the usual harmony was restored. At the commencement of 1786, while this matter was pending, he made a voyage to Chatigan, the boundary of the British dominions in Bengal towards the east. In this "Indian Montpelier," where he describes "the hillocks covered with pepper vines, and sparkling with blossoms of the coffee tree," in addition to his other literary researches he twice perused the poem of Ferdausi, consisting of above sixty thousand couplets. This he considered to be an epic poem as majestic and entire as the Iliad; and thought the outline of it related to a single hero, Khosrau, (the Cyrus of Herodotus and Xenophon), whom, as he says, "the Asiaticks, conversing with the Father of European History, described according to their popular traditions by his true name, which the Greek alphabet could not express." A nearer acquaintance with the great epic bard of Persia had now taught him therefore to retract the assertion he had made in his Commentary on Asiatic Poetry, that "the hero, as it is called, of the poem, was that well known Hercules of the Persians, named Rustem; although there are several other heroes, or warriors, to each of whom their own particular glory is assigned." At the time of writing this, he had an intention, if leisure should be allowed him, of translating the whole work. A version of Ferdausi,

either in verse unfettered by rhyme, or in such numerous prose as the prophetical parts of the Bible are translated into, would, I think, be the most valuable transfer that our language is now capable of receiving from foreign tongues.

In 1787 he flattered himself that his constitution had overcome the climate; but his apprehensions were awakened for the health of Lady Jones, to which it had been yet more unfavourable; and he resolved, if some amendment did not appear likely, to urge her return to her native country; preferring, he said, the pang of separation for five or six years, to the anguish, which he should hardly survive, of losing her.

At the beginning of 1789 appeared the first volume of the Society's Researches, selected by the President. Two other volumes followed during his life-time, and a fourth was ready for the press at the time of his decease.

In the same year he published his version of an Indian drama of Calidas, entitled Sancontala, or the Fatal Ring; a wild and beautiful composition, which makes us desire to see more by the same writer, who has been termed the Shakspeare of India, and who lived in the last century before the Christian era. The doubts suggested by the critics in England, concerning the authenticity of this work, he considered as scarcely deserving of a serious reply.

In his discourses, delivered before the Society, he

discusses the origin of the several nations which inhabit the great continent of Asia, together with its borderers, mountaineers, and islanders; points out the advantages to be derived from the concurrent researches of the members of the Society, amongst which the confirmation of the Mosaic account of the primitive world is justly insisted on as the most important; and enlarges on the philosophy of the Asiatics. Besides several other essays, particular dissertations are allotted to the subjects of the Indian chronology; the antiquity of their zodiac, which he maintains not to have been formed from the Greek or Arabs; the literature of the Hindus; and the musical modes used by that people.

In the course of the last two years he edited the Persian poem by Hatefi, of Lailë and Majnoon, the Petrarch and Laura of the Orientals. The book was published at his own cost; and the profits of the sale appropriated to the relief of insolvent debtors in the gaol at Calcutta.

In 1793 Lady Jones, to whose constitution, naturally a weak one, the climate continued still unpropitious, embarked for England. The physicians had long recommended a return to Europe as necessary for the restoration of her health, or rather as the only means of preserving her life; but her unwillingness to quit her husband had hitherto retained her in India. His eagerness to accomplish his great object

of preparing the Code of Laws for the natives would not suffer him to accompany her. He hoped, however, that by the ensuing year he should have executed his design; and giving up the intention he had had of making a circuit through Persia and China on his return, he determined to follow her then without any deviation from his course. In the beginning of 1794 he published a translation of the Ordinances of Menu, on which he had been long employed, and which may be regarded as initiatory to his more copious pandect.

The last twenty years of his life he proposed passing in a studious retreat after his return to England; and had even commissioned one of his friends to look out for a pleasant country-house in Middlesex, with a garden, and ground to pasture his cattle.

But this prospect of future ease and enjoyment was not to be realized. The event, which put an unexpected end both to that and to his important scheme for the public advantage, cannot be so well related as in the words of Lord Teignmouth. "On the 20th of April, or nearly about that date, after prolonging his walk to a late hour, during which he had imprudently remained in conversation in an unwholesome situation, he called upon the writer of these sheets, and complained of agueish symptoms, mentioning his intention of taking some medicine, and repeating jocularly an old proverb, that "an ague in the spring is medicine for a king." He had no

suspicion at the time of the real nature of his indisposition, which proved in fact to be a complaint common in Bengal, an inflammation in the liver. The disorder was, however, soon discovered by the penetration of the physician, who after two or three days was called in to his assistance; but it had then advanced too far to yield to the efficacy of the medicines usually prescribed, and they were administered in vain. The progress of the complaint was uncommonly rapid, and terminated fatally on the 27th of April, 1794.

"On the morning of that day, his attendants, alarmed at the evident symptoms of approaching dissolution, came precipitately to call the friend who has now the melancholy task of recording the mournful event: not a moment was lost in repairing to his house. He was lying on a bed in a posture of meditation, and the only symptom of remaining life was a small degree of motion in the heart, which after a few seconds ceased, and he expired without a pang or groan. His bodily suffering, from the complacency of his features, and the ease of his attitude, could not have been severe; and his mind must have derived consolation from those sources where he had been in the habit of seeking it, and where alone in our last moments it can be found." "The funeral ceremony," adds his noble biographer, "was performed on the following day, with the honours due to his public station; and the numerous attendance

of the most respectable British inhabitants of Calcutta evinced their sorrow for his loss, and their respect for his memory. The Pundits who were in the habit of attending him, when I saw them at a public *durbar*, a few days after that melancholy event, could neither restrain their tears for his loss, nor find terms to express their admiration at the wonderful progress which he had made in the sciences which they professed."

A domestic affliction of the severest kind was spared him by his removal from life. Eight years after that event, his sister, who was married to an opulent merchant retired from business, perished miserably, in consequence of her clothes having taken fire.

His large collection of Sanscrit, Arabic, and other eastern manuscripts, was presented by his widow to the Royal Society. A catalogue of them, compiled by Mr. Wilkins, is inserted in his works.

The following list of desiderata was found among his papers, after his decease.

India.

The Ancient Geography of India, &c., from the Puránas.

A Botanical Description of Indian Plants, from the Cochás, &c.

A Grammar of the Sanscrit Language, from Pànini.

A Dictionary of the Sanscrit Language, from thirty-two original Vocabularies and Niructi.

On the ancient Music of the Indians.

On the Medical Substances of India, and the Indian Art of Medicine.

On the Philosophy of the Ancient Indians.

A Translation of the Véda.

On Ancient Indian Geometry, Astronomy, and Algebra.

A Translation of the Puránas.

Translation of the Mahábharat, and Rámáyan.

On the Indian Theatre, &c. &c.

On the Indian Constellations, with their Mythology, from the Puránas.

The History of India, before the Mohammedan Conquest, from the Sanscrit Cashmir Histories.

Arabia.

The History of Arabia before Mohammed.

A Translation of the Hamása.

A Translation of Hariri.

A Translation of the Fácahatâl Khulafâ. Of the Cáfiah.

Persia.

The History of Persia, from authorities in Sanscrit, Arabic, Greek, Turkish, Persian, ancient and modern.

The five Poems of Nizámi, translated in prose.

A Dictionary of pure Persian—Jehangiri.

China.

Translation of the Shí-cing.

The Text of Con-fu-tsu, verbally translated.

Tartary.

A History of the Tartar Nations, chiefly of the Moguls and Othmans, from the Turkish and Persian.

By an unanimous vote of the East India Company Directors, it was resolved, that a cenotaph, with a suitable inscription, should be raised to his memory in St. Paul's Cathedral; and that a statue of him should be sent to Bengal, for the purpose of being placed there in a proper situation.

A monument has also been erected to his memory in the anti-chapel of University College, Oxford, by Lady Jones, with the following inscription:

M. S.
Gulielmi Jones equitis aurati,
Qui clarum in literis nomen a patre acceptum
Magnâ cumulavit gloriâ.
Ingenium in illo erat scientiarum omnium capax,
Disciplinisque optimis diligentissimè excultum.
Erat indoles ad virtutem eximia,
Et in Justitiâ, Libertate, Religione vindicandâ
Maximè probata.
Quicquid autem utile vel honestum
Consiliis, Exemplo, Auctoritate vivus promoverat,
Id omne scriptis suis immortalibus
Etiam nunc tuetur atque ornat.
Præstantissimum hunc virum,
Cùm a provinciâ Bengalâ,
Ubi judicis integerrimi munus
Per decennium obierat,
Reditum in patriam meditaretur,
Ingruentis morbi vis oppressit,
X. Kal. Jun. A. C. MDCCLXXXXIV. Æt. XLVIII.
Ut quibus in ædibus
Ipse olim socius inclaruisset,
In iisdem memoria ejus potissimum conservaretur,
Honorarium hoc monumentum
Anna Maria filia Jonathan Shipley, Epis. Asaph.
Conjugi suo, B. M.
P. C.

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But whilst his viewless origin he sought,
One plain he saw of living waters blue,
Their spring nor saw nor knew.
Then in his parent stalk again retired,
With restless pain for ages he inquired
What were his powers, by whom, and why, conferr'd,
With doubts perplex'd, with keen impatience fired,
He rose, and rising heard
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Brahma! no more in vain research persist.
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> ——quos æquus amavit
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From what is recorded of the infancy of Chatterton, parents may be satisfied that an inaptness to learn in childhood, is far from being a prognostic of future dullness. At the age of five years, he was sent to the school of which his father had been master, and was found so incorrigibly stupid, that he was rejected by the teacher, whose name was Love, as incapable of profiting by his instruction. His mother, as most mothers would have done in the like case, bitterly lamented her son's untowardness; when an old musical manuscript in French coming in his way, he fell in love, as she expressed it, with the illuminated capitals. Of this fancy she eagerly availed herself to lead him on to an acquaintance with the alphabet; and from hence proceeded to teach him to

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A little before he had attained his eighth year, he was admitted into Colston's charity school in Bristol, an institution in some respects similar to that excellent one of Christ's Hospital in London, the boys being boarded and clothed, as well as instructed, in the house. In two years his dislike to reading was so thoroughly overcome, that he spent the pocket-money allowed him by his mother in hiring books from a circulating library. He became reserved, thoughtful, and at times melancholy; mixed little in childish sports; and between his eleventh and twelfth years had made a catalogue of the books he had read to the number of seventy. It is to be regretted, that with a dispo-

sition thus studious, he was not instructed in any language but his own. The example of one of the assistants in the school, named Thomas Phillips, spread a poetical emulation among the elder boys, of whom Thistlethwaite, Cary, and Fowler, figured in the periodical publications of the day. Chatterton did not escape the contagion; and a pocket-book presented to him by his sister, as a new-year's gift, was returned at the end of the year filled with his writing, chiefly in verse. Phillips is probably the person whose skill in poetry is extolled by Chatterton in an elegy on the death of his acquaintance of that name, which has some stanzas of remarkable beauty.

Soon after his confirmation by the bishop, at twelve years of age, he was prompted by the serious reflections which the performance of that ceremony had awakened in him, to compose some lines on the Last Day, and a paraphrase of the ninth chapter of Job, and of some chapters in Isaiah. Had his life been protracted, there is every reason to believe, from the process which usually takes place in minds constituted like his, that after an interval of scepticism, these feelings of piety would have returned in their full force. At the same time he indulged himself in satirical effusions on his master, and such of his schoolfellows as had provoked either his resentment or his ridicule.

On the first of July, 1767, he was taken from

school, and apprenticed for seven years to Mr. John Lambert, attorney, of Bristol, to be instructed in the art of a scrivener. The apprentice fee was only ten pounds; he slept in the room with the footboy, and was confined to the office from eight o'clock in the morning, with the usual interval for dinner, till the same hour at night. His conduct was such as left his master no room for blame. He never exceeded the hours limited for his absence, except on one occasion, when he had been to spend an evening in the company of his mother and some friends. Once only he incurred correction. His old schoolmaster had received an abusive anonymous letter; and Lambert having discovered from the hand-writing, which was ill disguised, and by the paper, which was the same as that used in his office, that Chatterton was the writer, thought it necessary to check so mischievous a propensity, by inflicting on him one or two blows. Though he was compelled to pass so large a portion of time in confinement, he had much leisure left him, as his master's business frequently did not occupy more than two hours in the day. His chief employment was the copying of precedents, with which he filled a folio book of 344 pages closely written.

At the beginning of October, 1768, the new bridge at Bristol was completed; and about the same time there appeared in the Bristol Journal a paper, purporting to be a description of the Fryar's first passing

over the old bridge, taken from an ancient manuscript, and signed Dunhelmus Bristoliensis. By this the public curiosity was excited; and the printer not being able to satisfy the inquiries that were made concerning the quarter from whence he had received the communication, it was with some difficulty traced to Chatterton. To the menaces of those, who first roughly demanded from him an account of the means by which the paper had come into his hands, he refused to give any reply; but on being more mildly questioned, after some prevaricating, said, that he had got it, together with several other manuscripts, that had been in the possession of his father, by whom they were found in a large box, in an upper room, over the chapel, on the north side of Redcliffe church. That some old parchments had been seen by him in his mother's house is nearly certain; nor is it at all improbable that they might have been discovered in a neglected coffer in the church, according to the account he gave of them. But that either the description of the Fryar's passage over the bridge, or the most considerable of the poems attributed to Rowley were among them, can scarcely be credited. The delusion supposed to have been practised on the public by Macpherson, and that acknowledged to have been so by Walpole, in passing off the Castle of Otranto for a translation from the Italian, were then recent; and these examples might have easily engaged Chatterton to attempt a fraud, which did not seem

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sition thus studious, he was not instructed in any language but his own. The example of one of the assistants in the school, named Thomas Phillips, spread a poetical emulation among the elder boys, of whom Thistlethwaite, Cary, and Fowler, figured in the periodical publications of the day. Chatterton did not escape the contagion; and a pocket-book presented to him by his sister, as a new-year's gift, was returned at the end of the year filled with his writing, chiefly in verse. Phillips is probably the person whose skill in poetry is extolled by Chatterton in an elegy on the death of his acquaintance of that name, which has some stanzas of remarkable beauty.

Soon after his confirmation by the bishop, at twelve years of age, he was prompted by the serious reflections which the performance of that ceremony had awakened in him, to compose some lines on the Last Day, and a paraphrase of the ninth chapter of Job, and of some chapters in Isaiah. Had his life been protracted, there is every reason to believe, from the process which usually takes place in minds constituted like his, that after an interval of scepticism, these feelings of piety would have returned in their full force. At the same time he indulged himself in satirical effusions on his master, and such of his schoolfellows as had provoked either his resentment or his ridicule.

On the first of July, 1767, he was taken from

read in an old Testament or Bible in the black letter. Doctor Gregory, one of his biographers, justly observes, that it is not unreasonable to suppose his peculiar fondness for antiquities to have originated in this incident.

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over the old bridge, taken from an ancient manuscript, and signed Dunhelmus Bristoliensis. By this the public curiosity was excited; and the printer not being able to satisfy the inquiries that were made concerning the quarter from whence he had received the communication, it was with some difficulty traced to Chatterton. To the menaces of those, who first roughly demanded from him an account of the means by which the paper had come into his hands, he refused to give any reply; but on being more mildly questioned, after some prevaricating, said, that he had got it, together with several other manuscripts, that had been in the possession of his father, by whom they were found in a large box, in an upper room, over the chapel, on the north side of Redcliffe church. That some old parchments had been seen by him in his mother's house is nearly certain; nor is it at all improbable that they might have been discovered in a neglected coffer in the church, according to the account he gave of them. But that either the description of the Fryar's passage over the bridge, or the most considerable of the poems attributed to Rowley were among them, can scarcely be credited. The delusion supposed to have been practised on the public by Macpherson, and that acknowledged to have been so by Walpole, in passing off the Castle of Otranto for a translation from the Italian, were then recent; and these examples might have easily engaged Chatterton to attempt a fraud, which did not seem

To the name of poet, as it implies the possession of an inventive faculty, Sir William Jones has but little pretension. He borrows much; and what he takes he seldom makes better. Yet some portion of sweetness and elegance must be allowed him.

In the hymns to the Hindu deities, the imagery, which is derived chiefly from Eastern sources, is novel and attractive. That addressed to Narayena is in a strain of singular magnificence. The description, in the fourth stanza, of the creative power or intelligence, issuing from the primal germ of being, and questioning itself as to its own faculties, has something in it that fills the mind with wonder.

What four-form'd godhead came,
With graceful stole and beamy diadem,
Forth from thy verdant stem?
Full-gifted Brahma! Rapt in solemn thought
He stood, and round his eyes fire-darting threw
But whilst his viewless origin he sought,
One plain he saw of living waters blue,
Their spring nor saw nor knew.
Then in his parent stalk again retired,
With restless pain for ages he inquired
What were his powers, by whom, and why, conferr'd,
With doubts perplex'd, with keen impatience fired,
He rose, and rising heard
Th' unknown, all-knowing word,
Brahma! no more in vain research persist.
My veil thou canst not move.—Go, bid all worlds exist.

To the hymns he subjoins the first Nemean ode of Pindar, "not only," he says, "in the same measure as nearly as possible, but almost word for word with the original; those epithets and phrases only being necessarily added which are printed in Italic letters." Whoever will be at the trouble of comparing him with Pindar, will see how far he is from fulfilling this promise.

Of the Palace of Fortune, an Indian tale, the conclusion is unexpected and affecting.

The Persian song from Hafez, is one of those pieces that, by a nameless charm, fasten themselves on the memory.

In the Caissa, or poem on Chess, he is not minute enough to gratify a lover of the game, and too particular to please one who reads it for the poetry. The former will prefer the Scacchia Ludus of Vida, of which it is a professed imitation; and the latter will be satisfied with the few spirited lines which the Abbé de Lille has introduced into his L'Homme des Champs, on this subject. Vida's poem is a surprising instance of difficulty overcome, in the manner with which he has moulded the phraseology of the classics to a purpose apparently alien from it; and he has made his mythology agreeable, trivial as it is, by the skill with which it is managed. But I find that both the Caissa, and the Arcadia, which is taken from a paper in the Guardian, were done, as the

author says, at the age of 16 or 17 years, and were saved from the fire in preference to a great many others, because they seemed more correctly versified than the rest. It is, therefore, hardly fair to judge them very strictly.

His Latin commentary on Asiatic poetry is more valuable for the extracts from the Persian and Arabic poets, which he has brought together in it, than to be commended for anything else that it contains, or for the style in which it is written. Certain marks of hurry in the composition, which his old schoolfellow, Doctor Parr, had intimated to him with the ingenuousness of a friend and a scholar, are still apparent. He takes up implicitly with that incomplete and partial, though very ingenious system, which Burke had lately put forth in his essay on the Sublime and Beautiful. He has supported that writer's definition of Beauty by a quotation from Hermogenes. A better confirmation of his theory might have been adduced from the Philebus of Plato, in which Socrates makes the same distinction as our eloquent countryman has taken so much pains to establish between that sensation which accompanies the removal of pain or danger, and which he calls delight—and positive pleasure.*

* Ἀληθεῖς δἄν τίνας, ὦ Σώκρατές, ὑπολαμβάνων, ὀρθῶς τίς διανοοῖτ' ἄν ; ΣΩ. Τὰς περὶ τε τὰ καλὰ λεγόμενα χρώματα

As the work, however, of a young man, the commentary was such as justly to raise high expectations of the writer.

His style in English prose, where he had most improved it, that is, in his discourses delivered in India on Asiatic History and Literature, is opulent without being superfluous; dignified, yet not pompous or inflated. He appears intent only on conveying to others the result of his own inquiries and reflections on the most important topics, in as perspicuous a manner as possible; and the embellishments of diction come to him unbidden and unsought. His prolixity does not weary, nor his learning embarrass, the reader. If he had been more elaborate, he might have induced a suspicion of artifice; if he had been less so, the weightiness of his matter would seem to have been scarcely enough considered.

καὶ περὶ τὰ σχήματα, καὶ τῶν ὀσμῶν τὰς πλείστας, καὶ τὰς τῶν φθόγγων, καὶ ὅσα τὰς ἐνδείας ἀναισθήτους ἔχοντα καὶ ἀλύπους, τὰς πληρώσεις αἰσθητὰς καὶ ἡδείας καθαρὰς λυπῶν παραδίδωσι. "What pleasures then, Socrates, may one justly conclude to be true ones?—*Soc.* Those which regard both such colours as are accounted beautiful; and figures; and many smells and sounds; and whatsoever things, when they are absent, we neither feel the want of, nor are uneasy for; but when present, we feel and enjoy without any mixture of uneasiness." He then goes on to exemplify these true pleasures in forms, colours, &c. Compare the De Rep. p. 584.

But he has higher claims to the gratitude of his country, and of mankind, than either prose or poetry can give. His steady zeal in the cause of liberty, and justice, and truth, is above all praise; and will leave his name among the few

> ——quos æquus amavit
> Jupiter, aut ardens evexit ad æthera virtus,
> Dis geniti.

THOMAS CHATTERTON.

If it were allowable for one who professes to write the lives of English poets to pass the name of Chatterton in silence, I should think the literature of our country more honoured by the concealment of his fate than by the record of his genius. Yet from his brief story, the young will learn, that genius is likely to lead them into misery, if it be not accompanied by something that is better than genius; and men, whom birth and station have rendered eminent, may discover that they owe some duty to those whom nature has made more than their equals; and who—

Beneath the good tho' far—are far above the great.

Thomas Chatterton was born in the parish of St. Mary Redcliffe, at Bristol, on the twentieth of November, 1752. His father, who was of the same name, and who died about three months before the birth of his son, had been writing-master to a classical school, singing-man in Bristol cathedral, and master of the free-school in Pyle-street in that city; and is related to have been inclined to a belief in magic, and deeply versed in Cornelius Agrippa. His forefathers had borne the humble office of sexton to St. Mary Redcliffe church for a century and a half, till the death of John Chatterton, great uncle of the poet.

From what is recorded of the infancy of Chatterton, parents may be satisfied that an inaptness to learn in childhood, is far from being a prognostic of future dullness. At the age of five years, he was sent to the school of which his father had been master, and was found so incorrigibly stupid, that he was rejected by the teacher, whose name was Love, as incapable of profiting by his instruction. His mother, as most mothers would have done in the like case, bitterly lamented her son's untowardness; when an old musical manuscript in French coming in his way, he fell in love, as she expressed it, with the illuminated capitals. Of this fancy she eagerly availed herself to lead him on to an acquaintance with the alphabet; and from hence proceeded to teach him to

Paris, than he could ever have felt in nursing the wayward genius of Chatterton.

During his residence in Lambert's house, his constitutional reserve had assumed an air of gloomy sullenness: he had repeatedly betrayed to the servants an intention of committing suicide; and at length a paper, entitled the last Will and Testament of Thomas Chatterton, which was found lying on his desk, manifested a design of perpetrating this act on the ensuing day, Easter Sunday, April 15th, 1770. On so unequivocal a proof as this appeared to be of his desperate resolution, his master no longer thought it safe to retain him.

A few months before, he had written letters to several booksellers and printers in London, and from them received assurances of protection and employment if he should remove to the capital. This decided him as to his future course. When he was questioned by Thistlethwaite as to the plan of life he intended to pursue, if the prospect which was thus held out, should fail him, he answered: "The promises I have had are sufficient to dispel doubt; but should I be deceived I will turn Methodist preacher. Credulity is as potent a deity as ever, and a new sect may easily be devised. But if that too should fail me, my last and final resource is a pistol." It is almost unnecessary to observe, that when he thus speculated on his future proceedings, his mind had

been strongly tainted with infidelity.—Towards the conclusion of April he set forth on his ill-omened journey. He had never yet gone farther than a Sunday's walk from his native city; and at the age of seventeen, equally inexperienced and confident, without a friend or a guide, and with principles shaken and perverted, he was about to enter on a new and perilous theatre; nor could it have been difficult to divine what the event must soon be. On the 26th of April 1770, immediately after his arrival in London, he writes to his mother, and speaks in high spirits of the encouragement he has met with from the booksellers to whom he has applied, "who," says he, "all approve of my design." On the sixth of the next month, he informs her that "he gets four guineas a month by one Magazine, and that he shall engage to write a history of England and other pieces, which will more than double that sum." "Mr. Wilkes had known him by his writings, since he first corresponded with the booksellers. He is to visit him the following week, and by his interest would ensure Mrs. Ballance the Trinity House." In short he is in raptures at the change in his condition and views; and talks as if his fortune were already made. He now inhabited the house of Walmsley, a plasterer, in Shoreditch, where his kinswoman Mrs. Ballance also lived.

The other letters to his mother and sisters betray

the same intoxication. At the Chapter Coffee-house, he meets with a gentleman "who would have introduced him as a companion to the young duke of Northumberland in his intended general tour, had he not been unluckily incapacitated for that office by his ignorance of any tongue but his own. His present profession obliges him to frequent places of the best resort. He employs his money in fitting himself fashionably, and getting into good company; this last article always brings him in good interest. He has engaged to live with a gentleman, the brother of a lord (a Scotch one indeed) who is going to advance pretty deeply into the bookselling branches, and is to have lodging and boarding, genteel and elegant, gratis, besides no inconsiderable premium. He is introduced to Beckford, the Lord Mayor, to whom he had addressed an Essay, and who received him with all the politeness a citizen could assume, and warmly invited him to come again. He might have a recommendation to Sir George Colebrook, an East India Director, as qualified for an office no ways despicable; but he shall not take a step to the sea while he can continue on land. If money flowed as fast upon him as honours, he would give his sister a portion of £5000." The kind-hearted boy did indeed find means out of the little profits arising from his writings, to send her, his mother, and his grandmother, several trifling presents.

In July he removed to lodgings at Mrs. Angel's, a sack-maker in Brook Street, Holborn. He assigned no reason for quitting those he had occupied in Shoreditch; but Sir Herbert Croft supposes, not without probability, that it was in order to be nearer to the places of public entertainment, to which his employment as a writer for ephemeral publications, obliged him to resort. On the 20th of July, he acquaints his sister that he is engaged in writing an Oratorio, which when finished would purchase her a gown, and that she might depend on seeing him before the first of January, 1771. "Almost all the next Town and Country Magazine," he tells her, "is his." He boasts that "he has an universal acquaintance; that his company is courted every where; and could he humble himself to go behind a compter, he could have had twenty places, but that he must be among the great: state matters suit him better than commercial." Besides his communications to the above mentioned miscellany, he was a frequent contributor of essays and poems to several of the other literary journals. As a political writer, he had resolved to employ his pen on both sides. "Essays," he tells his sister, "on the patriotic side, fetch no more than what the copy is sold for. As the patriots themselves are searching for a place, they have no gratuities to spare. On the other hand, unpopular essays will not be accepted, and you must

pay to have them printed; but then you seldom lose by it. Courtiers are so sensible of their deficiency in merit, that they generally reward all who know how to daub them with an appearance." But all his visions of emolument and greatness were now beginning to melt away. He was so tired of his literary drudgery, or found the returns it made him so inadequate to his support, that he condescended to solicit the appointment of a chirurgeon's mate to Africa, and applied to Mr. Barrett for a recommendation, which was refused him, probably on account of his incapacity. It is difficult to trace the particulars of that sudden transition from good to bad fortune which seems to have befallen him. That his poverty was extreme cannot be doubted. The younger Warton was informed by Mr. Cross, an apothecary in Brook Street, that while Chatterton lived in the neighbourhood, he often called at his shop; but though pressed by Cross to dine or sup with him, constantly declined the invitation, except one evening, when he was prevailed on to partake of a barrel of oysters, and ate most voraciously. A barber's wife who lived within a few doors of Mrs. Angel's, gave testimony, that after his death Mrs. Angel told her, that "on the 24th of August, as she knew he had not eaten anything for two or three days, she begged he would take some dinner with her; but he was offended at her expressions, which seemed to hint that he was in

want, and assured her he was not hungry." The stripling whose pride would not let him go behind a compter, had now drunk the cup of bitterness to the dregs. On that day he swallowed arsenic in water, and on the following expired. His room was broken into, and found strewn over with fragments of papers which he had destroyed. He was interred in the burying-ground of Shoe Lane work-house. Such was the end of one who had given greater proofs of poetical genius than perhaps had ever been shown in one of his years. By Johnson he was pronounced "the most extraordinary young man that had ever encountered his knowledge;" and Warton, in the History of English Poetry, where he discusses the authenticity of the Rowleian poems, gives it as his opinion, that Chatterton "would have proved the first of English poets if he had reached a maturer age."

"He was proud," says his sister, "and exceedingly imperious;" but both she and his school-fellow Thistlethwaite, vindicated him from the charge of libertinism, which was brought against him by some who thought they could not sufficiently blacken his memory. On the contrary, his abstemiousness was uncommon; he seldom used animal food or strong liquors, his usual diet being a piece of bread and a tart, and some water. He fancied that the full of the moon was the most propitious time for study, and

would often sit up and write the whole night by moonlight. His spirits were extremely uneven, and he was subject to long and frequent fits of absence, insomuch that he would look stedfastly in a person's face without speaking or seeming to see him for a quarter of an hour or more. There is said to have been something peculiarly pleasing in his manner and address. His person was marked by an air of manliness and dignity that bespoke the superiority of his mind. His eyes, one of which was more remarkable than the other, were of a grey colour, keen, and brilliant, especially when any thing occurred to animate him.

Of all the hypotheses concerning those papers which have been the subject of so much controversy, none seems more probable than that suggested by Warton, who, in the History of English Poetry, admits that some of the poems attributed to Rowley might have been preserved in Canynge's chest; and in another publication allows that Chatterton "might have discovered parchments of humble prose containing local memoirs and authentic deeds illustrating the history of Bristol, and biographical diaries, or other notices, of the lives of Canynge, Ischam, and Gorges. But that many of the manuscripts were not genuine, is proved not only by the dissimilitude of the style to any composition of the age of Henry VI. and Edward IV. and by the marked resemblance

to several passages in modern poets, but by certain circumstances which leave little or no doubt of their having been fabricated by Chatterton himself." One of his companions, at the time that he was an apprentice to Lambert, affirms, that he one day produced a piece of parchment on which he wrote several words, if not lines, in a character that appeared to his companion totally unlike English, that he then held it over a candle to give it the appearance of antiquity, which changed the colour of the ink, and made the parchment appear black and contracted. Another person declares, that he saw him rub a piece of parchment in several places in streaks with yellow ochre, and then rub it on the ground which was dirty, and afterwards crumple it in his hand. Having concluded the operation, he said it would do pretty well, but he could do it better at home. The first part of the Battle of Hastings, he confessed to Mr. Barrett, that he had written himself.

Some anachronisms as to particular allusions have been pointed out. The irregular, or Pindaric measure as it has been called, used in the song to Ælla, in the verses on the Mynster, and in the chorus in Goddwyn, was not employed till a much later æra. There are also in the Ælla some lines in blank verse, not introduced among us till the time of Surrey, who adopted it from the Italian.

Another criterion of a more general nature, which

has not yet, at least that I am aware, been applied to those compositions, is, I think, very strongly against the antiquity of them; and that is, that the intention and purpose of the writer in the longer pieces is not sufficiently marked and decisive for the remoter ages to which they are ascribed. In the early stages of a language, before conventional phrases have been formed, and a stock of imagery, as it were, provided for the common use, we find that the plan of a work is often rude and simple indeed, but that it almost always bears evident signs of having subsisted anteriorly in the mind of the writer as a whole. If we try Ælla, the longest of the poems, by this test, we shall discover strong evidence of its being modern. A certain degree of uniformity is the invariable characteristic of the earlier productions of art; but here is as much desultoriness and incoherence, as can well be possible in a work that makes any pretensions to a plan. On this internal proof alone I should not hesitate in assigning it to Chatterton rather than to Rowley, to the one who luxuriated in an abundance of poetic materials poured out before him for his use or his imitation, rather than to the other who had comparatively but a few meagre models to work upon.

Where he is much inspirited by his subject, being thrown off his guard, he forgets himself and becomes modern, as in these lines, from which I have removed nothing but the old spelling.

First Dane.

Fly, fly, ye Danes! Magnus, the chief, is slain;
The Saxons come, with Ælla at their head;
Let's strive to get away to yonder green;
Fly, fly! this is the kingdom of the dead.

Second Dane.

O gods! have Romans at my anlace bled?
And must I now for safety fly away?
See! far besprenged all our troops are spread,
Yet I will singly dare the bloody fray.
But no; I'll fly, and murder in retreat;
Death, blood, and fire shall mark the going of my feet.

The following repetitions are, if I mistake not, quite modern:

Now Ælla *look'd*, and *looking* did exclaim;

and,

He *falls*, and *falling* rolleth thousands down.

As is also this antithetical comparison of the qualities of a war-horse to the mental affections of the rider:

Bring me a steed, with eagle-wings for fight,
Swift as my wish, and as my love is, strong.

There are sometimes single lines, that bear little relation to the place in which they stand, and seem to be brought in for no other purpose than their effect on the ear. This is the contrivance of a modern and a youthful poet.

Thy words be high of din, but nought beside,

is a line that occurs in Ælla, and may sometimes be applied to the author himself.

Nothing indeed is more wonderful in the Rowley poems than the masterly style of versification which they frequently display. Few more exquisite specimens of this kind can be found in our language than the Minstrel's song in Ælla, beginning,

O sing unto my roundelay.

A young poet may be expected to describe warmly and energetically whatever interests his fancy or his heart; but a command of numbers would seem to be an art capable of being perfected only by long-continued and diligent endeavours. It must be recollected, however, that much might be done in the time which was at Chatterton's disposal, when that time was undivided by the study of any other language but his own. We see, in the instance of Milton's juvenile poems in Latin, not to mention others, to what excellence this species of skill may be brought, even in boyhood, where the organs are finely disposed for the perception of musical delight; and if examples of the same early perfection be rarer in our own tongue, it may be because so much labour is seldom or ever exacted, at that age, in the use of it.

Tyrwhitt, whose critical acumen had enabled him to detect a supposititious passage in a tragedy of Euri-

pides, was at first a dupe to the imposture of Chatterton, and treated the poems as so decidedly genuine, that he cited them for the elucidation of Chaucer; but seeing good grounds for changing his opinion, as Mr. Nichols* informs us, he cancelled several leaves before his volume was published. Walpole was equally deceived; though his vanity afterwards would not suffer him to own that he had been so. Mr. Tyson, in a letter to Dr. Glynn,† well observed, that he could as soon believe that Hogarth painted the cartoons, as that Chatterton wrote Rowley's poems: yet (he adds) they are as unlike any thing ancient, as Sir Joshua's flowing contour is unlike the squares and angles of Albert Durer.

The poems that were written after his arrival in London, when his mind was agitated by wild speculations, and thrown off its balance by noise and bustle, were, as might be expected, very unequal to those which he had produced in the retirement of his native place. Yet there is much poignancy in the satires. The three African eclogues have a tumid grandeur. Heccar and Gaira is the best of them.

The following verses are strong and impassioned:

> The children of the wave, whose pallid race
> Views the faint sun display a languid face,

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* Illustrations of Literature, vol. i. p. 158.

† Nichols's Literary An. vol. viii. p. 640.

From the red fury of thy justice fled,
Swifter than torrents from their rocky bed.
Fear with a sicken'd silver tinged their hue,
The guilty fear where vengeance is their due.

Many of the pieces, confessedly his own, furnish descriptions of natural objects, equally happy with those so much admired in the Rowleian poems.

When golden Autumn, wreath'd in ripen'd corn,
From purple clusters pour'd the foamy wine,
Thy genius did his sallow brows adorn,
And made the beauties of the season thine.
With rustling sound the yellow foliage flies,
And wantons with the wind in rapid whirls,
The gurgling rivulet to the vallies hies,
Whilst on its bank the spangled serpent curls.

Pale rugged Winter bending o'er his tread;
His grizzled hair bedropt with icy dew;
His eyes a dusky light congeal'd and dead,
His robe a tinge of bright ethereal blue.

His train a motley'd, sanguine, sable cloud,
He limps along the russet dreary moor,
Whilst rising whirlwinds, blasting keen and loud,
Roll the white surges to the sounding shore.

The lofty elm, the oak of lordly look,
The willow shadowing the babbling brook,
The hedges blooming with the sweets of May,
With double pleasure mark'd the gladsome way.

In "Resignation," from which these lines are taken,

there is a fine personification of Hope, though the application of it is designedly ludicrous.

> See Hope array'd in robes of virgin white,
> Trailing an arch'd variety of light,
> Comes showering blessings on a ruin'd realm,
> And shows the crown'd director of the helm.

With him poetry looks best when she is

> All deftly mask'd as hoar antiquity.

Scarcely any of these later poems are free from grammatical incorrectness or ambiguity of expression. Some are debased by the more serious fault of ribaldry and profaneness. His irreligion, however, seems to have been rather the fluctuating of a mind that had lost its hold on truth for a time, than the scepticism of one confirmed in error. He acknowledges his dependence on a Creator, though he casts off his belief in a Redeemer. His incredulity does not appear so much the offspring of viciousness refusing the curb of moral restraint, as of pride unwilling to be trammelled by the opinions of the multitude. We cannot conceive that, with a faculty so highly imaginative, he could long have continued an unbeliever; or, perhaps, that he could ever have been so in his heart. But he is a portentous example of the dangers to which an inexperienced youth, highly gifted by nature, is exposed, when thrown into the midst of greedy speculators, intent only on availing

themselves of his resources for their own advantage, and without any care for his safety or his peace.

Some years ago the present laureat (Southey) undertook the office of editing his works, for the benefit of his sister, Mrs. Newton. It is to be lamented, that a project so deserving of encouragement does not appear to have been successful.

HENRY KIRKE WHITE.

Henry Kirke White was born at Nottingham, on the twenty-first of March, 1785. His father, John, was a butcher; his mother, Mary Neville, was of a respectable family in Staffordshire. Of the schoolmistress, who taught him to read and whose name was Garrington, he has drawn a pleasing picture in his verses entitled Childhood. At about six years of age he began to learn writing, arithmetic, and French, from the Rev. John Blanchard; and when out of school was employed in carrying about the butcher's basket. Some lines "On being confined to School one pleasant Summer Morning," written at the age of thirteen, by which time he had been placed under the tuition of a Mr. Shipley, are nearly equal to any he

afterwards produced. Next year he was made to work at a stocking-loom, preparatively to his learning the business of a hosier; but his mother, seeing the reluctance with which he engaged in an employment so ill-suited to his temper and abilities, prevailed on his father, though not without much difficulty, to fix him in the office of Messrs. Coldham and Endfield, attorneys in Nottingham. As his parents could not afford to pay a fee, he was (in 1799) engaged to serve for two years, and at the end of that term he was articled. Most of his time that could be spared from the duties of the office was, at the recommendation of his masters, spent in learning Latin, to which, of his own accord he added Greek, Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese. Some knowledge of chemistry, astronomy, electricity, and some skill in music and drawing, were among his other voluntary acquirements. White was one of those, who feel an early and importunate craving for distinction. He had already been chosen member of a literary society in his native town; and soon after his election, as Mr. Southey relates, "he lectured upon genius, and spoke extempore for about two hours, in such a manner, that he received the unanimous thanks of the society, and they elected this young Roscius of Oratory their Professor of Literature." He next became a writer in several of the Monthly Miscellanies; and (in 1803) put forth a volume of poems. A few words of unfortunate criti-

cism in one of the Reviews, which in a few years more he would have learned to smile at, had nearly crushed his hopes as an author; when Mr. Southey, into whose hands both the Review and the Poems themselves chanced to fall, generously came to his relief. The protection of one so deservedly eminent could not fail of affording him some comfort: though he still complained that "the Review went before him wherever he turned his steps, that it haunted him incessantly, and that he was persuaded it was an instrument in the hands of Satan to drive him to distraction.

It is not usual to hear a poet, much less a young poet, complaining that Satan is busied about his concerns. But his mind, which had before been disposed to scepticism, was now determined with such force to an extreme of devotional feeling, as scarcely to retain its due balance. In what manner the change was effected, it is not very material to inquire; but the different accounts which Mr. Southey has given of the matter, according to the information he received at different times, may serve to shew how little dependance is to be placed on relations of this kind. At first he tells us "that Mr. Pigott, the curate of St. Mary's, Nottingham, hearing what was the bent of his religious opinions, sent him, by a friend, Scott's Force of Truth, and requested him to peruse it attentively, which he promised to do. Having looked at the book, he told the person who brought it to him, that he would soon

write an answer to it; but about a fortnight afterwards, when this friend inquired how far he had proceeded in his answer to Mr. Scott, Henry's reply was in a very different tone and temper. He said, that to answer that book was out of his power, and out of any man's, for it was founded upon eternal truth; that it had convinced him of his error; and that so thoroughly impressed was he with a sense of the importance of his Maker's favour, that he would willingly give up all acquisitions of knowledge, and all hopes of fame, and live in a wilderness unknown till death, so he could ensure an inheritance in heaven." In a subsequent correction of this statement, Mr. Southey informs us that Scott's Force of Truth was put into his hands by his friend and fellow-pupil Mr. Almond, since Rector of St Peter's, Nottingham, with an entreaty that he would peruse it at his leisure: that the book produced little effect, and was returned with disapprobation; but that afterwards in a conversation with Mr. Almond, he declared his belief with much vehemence and agitation. This was soon after he had reached his eighteenth year. Maturer judgment "convinced him that 'zeal was to be tempered with discretion; that the service of Christ was *a rational service*'; that a strong assurance 'was not to be resorted to as the *touchstone* of our acceptance with God,' that it was not even the necessary attendant of religious life;" as more experience of his spiritual

associates discovered to him that their professions of zeal were too frequently accompanied by want of charity; and that in matters of religion, as in every thing else, they who feel the most, generally talk the least."

That even before his conversion, as it is rather improperly called, he was not without a sense of religious duty, may be inferred from his having already chosen the Church as a profession in preference to the Law. To this alteration in his plan of life he might have been directed by a love of study, or by the greater opportunities held out to him of gratifying his literary ambition; but it is unreasonable to suppose that he would have voluntarily taken such a measure, if his own conviction had run counter to it. The attorneys to whom he was bound, were ready enough to release him; since, though well satisfied with his conduct and attention to their concerns, they perceived him to be troubled with a deafness which would incapacitate him for the practice of the law. The means of supporting him at the University were accordingly supplied by the liberality of the friends whom he had gained; and after passing a twelvemonth with the Rev. Mr. Grainger, of Winteringham in Lincolnshire, to prepare himself, he was in 1805 entered a sizar of St John's, Cambridge. Here his application to books was so intense, that his health speedily sank under it. He was indeed "declared to be the first man of his

year;" but the honour was dearly purchased at the expense of "dreadful palpitations in the heart, nights of sleeplessness and horrors, and spirits depressed to the very depths of wretchedness." In July, 1806, his laundress on coming into his room at College, saw him fallen down in a convulsive fit, bleeding and insensible. His great anxiety was to conceal from his mother the state to which he was reduced. At the end of September, he went to London in search of relaxation and amusement; and in the next month, returned to College with a cough and fever, which this effort had encreased. His brother, on being informed of his danger hastened to Cambridge, and found him delirious. He recovered sufficiently to know him for a few moments; but the next day sank into a stupor, and on the 19th of October expired. It was the opinion of his medical attendants, that if he had lived his intellect would have failed him.

He was buried in All-Saints Church, Cambridge, where his monument, sculptured by Chantrey, has been placed by Mr. Francis Boott, a stranger from Boston in America.

After his death all his papers were consigned to the hands of Mr. Southey. Their contents were multifarious; they comprised observations on law; electricity; the Greek and Latin languages, from their rudiments to the higher branches of critical study; on history, chronology, and divinity. He had begun

three tragedies, on Boadicea, Ines de Castro, and a fictitious story; several poems in Greek, and a translation of Samson Agonistes. The selection which Mr. Southey has made, consists of copious extracts from his letters, poems, and essays.

Mr. Southey has truly said of him, that what he is most remarkable for is *his uniform good sense.* To Chatterton, with whom this zealous friend and biographer has mentioned him, he is not to be compared. Chatterton has the force of a young poetical Titan, who threatens to take Parnassus by storm. White is a boy differing from others more in aptitude to follow than in ability to lead. The one is complete in every limb, active, self-confident, and restless from his own energy. The other, gentle, docile, and animated rather than vigorous. He began, as most youthful writers have begun, by copying those whom he saw to be the objects of popular applause, in his own day. He has little distinct character of his own. We may trace him by turns to Goldsmith, Chatterton, and Coleridge. His numbers sometimes offend the ear by unskilful combinations of sound, as in these lines—

But for the babe she bore beneath her breast:

And—

While every bleaching breeze that on her blows;

And sometimes, though more rarely, they gratify it by unexpected sweetness. He could occasionally look

abroad for himself, and describe what he saw. In his Clifton Grove there are some little touches of landscape-painting which are, as I think, unborrowed.

What rural objects steal upon the sight,
* * * *
The brooklet branching from the silver Trent,
The whispering birch by every zephyr bent,
The woody island and the naked mead,
The lowly hut half hid in groves of reed,
The rural wicket and the rural stile,
And frequent interspersed the woodman's pile.

Among his poems of later date, there is one unfinished fragment in this manner, of yet higher beauty.

Or should the day be overcast,
We'll linger till the show'r be past;
Where the hawthorn's branches spread
A fragrant cover o'er the head;
And list the rain-drops beat the leaves,
Or smoke upon the cottage eaves;
Or silent dimpling on the stream
Convert to lead its silver gleam.

THE END.

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